

CENTER FOR PLASTIC & COSMETIC SURGERY
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FACELIFT (Rhytidectomy)

You are about to undergo a facelift procedure. The following is an instruction sheet to help guide you through your recovery. Doctor Fedele strives to educate each patient thoroughly about their procedure and what to expect during their recovery. The staff at the Center for Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery are here to help and provide a supportive environment in which to ask questions or concerns that might arise. Please review the following instruction sheet and write down any questions that you may have. Doctor Fedele and his staff want to make sure that you are comfortable with the procedure and have all of your questions answered.

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

This procedure lasts approximately 3-1/2 to 4-1/2 hours. You will spend about 1-1/2 hours in the recovery room. You will likely stay overnight for recovery. You would be discharged home the next day.

You must have someone drive you home and stay with you during the first 24-hours following discharge.

Do not take aspirin or aspirin products (Ibuprofen, Vitamin-E or herbals) for three weeks prior to the surgery.

If you are a smoker, you should stop smoking at least four weeks prior to the surgery and for four weeks after the surgery. Please note: Smoking increases your risk for infection, scarring, delayed healing or skin loss and wound healing problems as well as an increased risk of anesthesia. Smoking risks are very serious for facelift procedure in particular. Any smoking four weeks prior to the surgery could compromise the healing and there could be skin loss because of inadequate blood supply.

Doctor Fedele can have your prescriptions for you prior to your surgery so that you can get them filled before the day of your surgery. This will make it easier for you immediately following the surgery and save any running around to fill prescriptions after your surgery.

DAY OF SURGERY EXPECTATIONS:

Discomfort after surgery is controlled with oral pain medications but you may experience continuous discomfort for the first 48 to 72 hours. This may be more like a tight feeling.

Narcotic pain medications can sometimes cause constipation. An over-the-counter stool softener (Colace) is recommended if you are prone to this.

Some nausea is normal in the first 24-48 hours following surgery. The surgery center can give you something prior to leaving. However, if you continue to experience nausea or vomiting, please contact the office to obtain a prescription for anti-nausea medication.

You will be wrapped with gauze and a dressing for the first 23 hours after the procedure.

Doctor Fedele will see you the following day and remove the heavier dressings and any drains that might be in place and give you a lighter dressing with a chin strap (type of garment). You should wear this chin strap for the next week continuously for the next week and for the second week as much as possible.

Keep conversations to a minimum to promote better dressing adherence.

The white Band-Aid strips called steri-strips, along the incision under your chin, can remain in place until they peel off or until your first postoperative visit.

Apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment along the incisions in front of your ear and into the hairline.

Any other dressing on the operative site should be changed daily as needed.

RECOVERY EXPECTATIONS

Week 1

Two days after the surgery you may shower and wash your hair with a mild shampoo. Only allow the shower to hit your face gently. Pat dry and be very gentle combing your hair. The incision does extend up into

Continue to reapply antibiotic ointment to all of the incision (Neosporin, Bacitracin or Bactroban are suitable).

Sleep with your head elevated above your shoulders on two pillows. This will help reduce the swelling. Ice compresses or a bag of frozen peas may be applied to your face for the first 48 hours to help with the swelling and bruising.

Take your prescriptions as prescribed. Complete your antibiotics and use your pain medicine as needed.

Wear your chinstrap or neckband as much as possible for the first week after surgery. This reduces swelling and keeps your neck tight.

Avoid bending over at the waist or engaging in any strenuous activity that could raise your blood pressure. This could result in increased swelling or bleeding.

Make an appointment with our office within five days. At that time, we will remove all of the stitches, and will give you further instructions.

Week 2 and Beyond

Expect bruising and swelling for several weeks. The swelling however can last even up to 3 months or longer.

You may likely begin normal activities by the end of the first week or beginning of the second week.

Walking is okay within the first 2 weeks; exercise after 4 weeks.

You can expect some tight feeling on your face when talking or eating. This is normal and should relax in several weeks. You may also experience some numbness to the skin in front of your ears. This will likely return to normal eventually.

Most people are socially accessible after two weeks. You may wear sunglasses or make-up as needed to help disguise any bruising.

The incisions and scars will continue to fade for up to 2 years.

PRECAUTIONS

If you have questions or are unsure of your postoperative recovery, please call the office for instructions. If you experience any of the following, please call the office immediately and have the answering service contact Dr. Fedele: extreme pain, significant swelling on only one side of the face, fever, chills, a "hot-to-touch" sensation or significant redness.