



***FACELIFT (RHYTIDECTOMY) INSTRUCTIONS***

1. Do not set or style your hair prior to entering the hospital. You should shampoo the night before surgery. Hair cannot be tinted or colored for 3 weeks after surgery, so have this done several days before surgery if necessary.
2. Notify our office if a cold or infection develops in the week prior to surgery.
3. The following post-operative conditions are normal and should not cause alarm:
  - a. The entire face will be swollen for 2-3 weeks, but this will start resolving 48 hrs after surgery. Swelling will usually be symmetric over the face but can be irregular.
  - b. Bruising, although localized, may be distributed throughout the face and will last for 1-2 weeks. The color may be purple or yellow.
  - c. Numbness is customary around the ears and under the chin; feeling will come back slowly over several months.
  - d. Dimpling of the cheeks sometimes occurs but disappears within 2-3 weeks.
  - e. Pain around the ears, especially on pressure, may persist for several weeks.
  - f. A feeling of tightness behind the ears and upper neck will last for a short time.
4. Your stitches will be removed on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> post-operative days.
5. Twice daily you should cleanse the incision sites with antibacterial soap, pat dry and apply Bacitracin.
6. You may wash your hair gently under the shower the day after surgery. Baby shampoo is recommended if you have also had a blepharoplasty.
7. Makeup may be worn on the face immediately after surgery, but not used on the incisions until they heal, usually within 2 weeks.
8. Areas that are undergoing healing, especially in the neck, may feel firm for several weeks. They will eventually soften. The tightness peaks during the third week.
9. Smoking is known to delay or prevent healing since the blood supply to the skin is reduced. To minimize possible complications such as skin loss and scarring, smokers must refrain from using tobacco 10 days before and 3 weeks after surgery. Nicorette gum and nicotine patches release a harmful vasoconstrictor and cannot be used.
10. The convalescence period varies. Although most bruising disappears in several weeks, residual swelling may last for months. Your appearance is generally presentable in 6-8 weeks, but healing continues for up to one year. The most sensitive areas are normally the cheekbones and around the ears, but you may experience tightness in the neck or cheek as well. Tissue healing may be influenced by many factors. Months after surgery you may suddenly experience some swelling in a certain area. Remember that the more extensive the surgery the longer the convalescence, but the more impressive and the longer lasting the results will be after your facelift. Healing is not completed as long as there are swelling and sensitive areas, and thus the final appearance has not been achieved.

***\*\*\* Do NOT put anything hot or cold on your face. Also, do NOT put pressure on the sides of your face and neck where it is numb. You can cause INJURY, loss of skin, and permanent scarring! \*\*\* If you have any questions, please call our office at 480-614-3535.***

Post-Operative appointments:

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