

Patient's Instructions

Blepharoplasty and/or Endoscopic Forehead/Brow Lift

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this booklet is to acquaint you with what you should and should not do following your surgery. These instructions are based on experience and must be followed faithfully to assure a smooth recovery. Be sure that you and those who will be caring for you are familiar with these postoperative procedures. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call (910)295-0216.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

Arrange for someone to care for you immediately following your surgery. You may still be groggy when you are released, so you will need a ride and someone to remain with you for at least the first 24 hours. Since you cannot drive for one week, you will need transportation to and from your office visits. If you live more than 30 minutes from Dr. Kilpatrick's office, you will need to make arrangements to stay within that range the first night following your surgery. The office can assist you in finding accommodations. You will receive several medication prescriptions and a list of medications to avoid, including aspirin and fish oil. Follow these instructions carefully in order to minimize swelling, discoloration or bleeding.

This would be a good time to obtain the items you will need for your post-operative home care: Q-Tips, hydrogen peroxide and over-the-counter bacitracin ointment (for forehead incisions only). You will need to have these prior to your surgery.

To help minimize swelling, the head of the bed should be elevated to a 60 degree level for the first night following your surgery. This can be accomplished by putting pillows under the head of the mattress or you may rest in a reclining chair. For the next three weeks and elevation of 45 degrees is desirable.

- Be sure that comfortable clothing is available for your recovery period – nothing that must go over the head.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery.
- Make every effort to be well rested prior to surgery.

DAY OF SURGERY

Wash your hair and face; and wear comfortable clothing to the office (something that buttons up the front). Do not wear make-up or fingernail polish. Men should shave closely.

SWELLING AND DISCOLORATION

As you were told before surgery, a varying amount of temporary swelling and discoloration follows every facial surgery, so try not to become anxious or depressed about it, it will pass. We tried to keep it at a minimum by using meticulous surgical technique and by asking you to follow our post-operative instructions closely.

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AFTER THE OPERATION

- 1) Continue to take the prescribed medications until your supply is exhausted; the prescriptions need not be refilled.
- 2) Sleep with your head elevated 45 degrees for three weeks.
- 3) Apply cool compresses to your eyes as much as possible during the first three days after surgery. Use a hand towel (not an ice bag) dipped in ice chips or place cold wash clothes in a plastic wrapper (baggie, etc.) Other options for cool compresses that have been recommended by previous surgery patients are small bags of frozen peas or corn.
- 4) *STAY UP* (sitting, standing, walking around) as much as possible after you return home --- this is important! Of course, you should rest when you tire.
- 5) *Avoid* bending or lifting heavy things for one week. Besides aggravating swelling, this may raise the blood pressure and start hemorrhage. No lifting over 5 pounds the first week, 25 pounds the second week.
- 6) *Avoid* straining stool, which also raises the blood pressure. If you feel you need a laxative get CORRECTOL from your pharmacist (no prescription is required).
- 7) *Avoid* hitting and bumping your face and eyes. It is wise not to pick up small children, and you should sleep alone for one or two weeks following your operation.
- 8) *Avoid* sunning the face for one year. At least a SPF 20 sunscreen should be worn on the face.
- 9) **Go over your suture lines 2 to 3 times a day with peroxide on a Q-Tip for one week or until there is no dried blood on the wound. Avoid getting peroxide in your eyes. Then put a small amount of Bacitracin Ophthalmic ointment on a Q-Tip and apply to suture lines on the eyelids. If you had the Endoscopic Forehead/Brow Lift, you may apply the over-the-counter Bacitracin ointment or Vaseline to the forehead incisions.**
- 10) Take only prescribed medication or Tylenol, *never aspirin*, as it promotes bleeding.
- 11) You may take a shower or bath the day after surgery. Do not be afraid to get suture lines wet but avoid strong water pressure.
- 12) Report any excessive bleeding that persists after holding pressure for 15-20-minutes.

YOUR MEDICATIONS

You were given prescriptions before your operation to help guard against infection, minimize swelling, and for pain, sleep, nausea, etc. You may start taking the antibiotic when you return home the day of surgery. You may take the rest of the medicines only if you need them for pain (Lortab), sleep, nausea (Phenergan Suppositories), etc. It is recommended that all of these be taken after you have eaten and not on an empty stomach.

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HEMORRHAGE

If hemorrhage occurs, go to bed, elevate the head, apply cold compresses over the eyes, and have someone report it to us by telephone. You will be told to report to the office or possibly the hospital.

TEMPERATURE

Generally, the body temperature does not raise much above 100 degrees following eyelid or eyebrow surgery, and this rise is due to dehydration caused by insufficient intake of fluids. People often think they have an increased temperature because they feel warm, when in reality, they do not. To be sure, measure your temperature with a thermometer.

You should report any persistent temperature above 101 degrees.

RESUMING NORMAL ACTIVITIES

- 1) *WEARING GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES:* EYE GLASSES may be worn as soon as the bandages are removed. CONTACT LENSES may be inserted 10 days after surgery.
- 2) *HAIR AND BODY CARE:* You may wash your hair out with luke-warm water in a shower and comb it out with a large toothed comb on the second day after surgery.
- 3) You may *HAVE YOUR HAIR WASHED* at a salon one week after your surgery, but do not use the usual type heat hair dryer, use a hand blow dryer, on a low setting. Be careful not to rest your neck on the rim of the wash bowl in the area of the incisions. Hair coloring should also be delayed until *six weeks after your surgery.*
- 4) Use cotton pads to *WASH THE FACE* gently with a facial cleanse twice daily after the first week, use a gentle upward motions.
- 5) Eye shadow and false eyelashes should not be applied until 10 days after surgery.
- 6) *Don't tweeze your eyebrows for two weeks.* You may want our esthetician to assist you with your eyebrow tweezing or waxing at that time.
- 7) Approximately two weeks to six months after your surgery you may see our esthetician for a complimentary mini-facial and mineral makeup application. This will help you get your skin care routine back to normal and cover any residual redness or bruising with mineral makeup.
- 8) You may wear a WIG regularly if you wish after surgery as long as it doesn't fit directly over the sutures or staples.
- 9) *HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES:* You may be up and around the house with your usual activities except those specifically outlined previously.
- 10) *PULL-OVER CLOTHING:* You should wear clothing that fastens either in the front or the back rather than the type that must be pulled over the head for one week
- 11) *ATHLETICS:* No swimming, strenuous athletic activity or exercises that involve turning the head for 4 weeks.
- 12) *RETURNING TO WORK AND RESUMING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:* When you should return to work depends on the amount of physical activity and public contact your job involves and also on the amount of

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swelling and discoloration you develop; the average patient may return to work or go out socially 2-3 weeks after surgery when these factors are minimal – you'll have to play this by ear! Do not drive for 2 weeks.

YOUR FIRST POST-OPERATIVE OFFICE VISIT

An appointment will be arranged for you to be seen in the office the day after surgery, the second day after surgery and one week after surgery. If these times have not been given to you by the time you leave the surgical facility please contact the office at (910)295-0216.

Don't build up a feeling of fear and anxiety about what is going to be done to you during these visits. The incisions will be gently cleansed and you will be instructed on how to do this at home. At your one week visit, the sutures from the eyelids and staples from the forehead (if you had the Endoscopic Forehead/Brow Lift) will be removed with special delicate instruments which minimize discomfort. Once these are out, you will probably feel much better.

INFORMATION ABOUT SOME POTENTIALLY UPSETTING, BUT RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT THINGS THAT MIGHT OCCUR DURING THE HEALING PERIOD

- 1) Swelling may persist somewhat longer than usual. However, we have never yet encountered a case wherein it didn't ultimately subside. The same is true of discoloration.
- 2) Swelling and discoloration become more pronounced after some patients leave the clinic. This is why you should follow the instructions previously given to minimize swelling and not take any medications containing aspirin. Furthermore, if you have nasal allergy or "sinus trouble," you should take antihistamines to decongest your nose as this may be a contributing factor.
- 3) Rarely, the whites of one or both eyes may become partially discolored. This is painless, will not harm vision, and absorbs eventually.
- 4) Occasionally, the swelling will cause the lower lid to be separated from the eyeball. This condition will be reversed as the swelling subsides but can be prolonged if face powder granules, etc., become deposited in the area when cosmetics are being applied.
- 5) During the first several days following surgery, the scars will be imperceptible. Then they go through a period of slight swelling and, perhaps, reddening, later (especially at the outer corners), this subsides and they become virtually imperceptible again. This is the way normal scars mature. Thus, any unevenness of the edges of the incisions or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary and will subside with the passage of time. Cosmetics or cortisone creams may be used to minimize the problem while the progressive evolution is occurring.
- 6) Occasionally, small cyst which resembles ordinary white heads will appear beside the upper lid incisions; like white heads, they will disappear after their contents are expressed in the office. They may also occur in the lower lids, but less frequently than the uppers.

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