

Corpus Christi Institute of Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR NECKLIFT

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest and increase your fluid intake.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more ripe fruit to your diet. Prunes and prune juice work well for most.
- Take pain medications as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Refrain from drinking alcohol for three weeks following surgery, even when no longer taking pain medications, as alcohol causes fluid retention.
- If you regularly take vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke or consume nicotine, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.
- **Please get Arnica in the pill form. Take once a day starting the day of surgery once you get home. Continue taking it for 2 weeks post op. This will help with bruising.**

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS

- Start walking as soon as possible with assistance the day of surgery, this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots. Starting the day after surgery, walk 300 feet three times per day with assistance daily.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- You may tire easily. Plan on taking it easy for the first week.
- No strenuous activities, including sexual activity and heavy housework, for at least 2 weeks. (Walking and mild stretching are fine.)
- Return to work in 14-21 days.

INCISION CARE

- You may shower 48 hours after surgery.
- Keep steri-strips on, and replace if they come off. Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for sign of infection. No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place.
- Keep head elevated; sleep with head on 2 pillows.
- Do not use hair dye or permanent solution until approved by your surgeon.
- You may use cold compresses for comfort and to help decrease the swelling.
- Hair is generally shampooed on the 2nd or 3rd postoperative day. The area of sutures must be washed gently but thoroughly each time.
- Do not set hair dryer temperature on hot, as you may not have feeling in operated areas.
- You may use makeup after the sutures are removed; new facial makeup can be used to cover up bruising, but not on the incisions. It is important to gently remove all makeup.

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EXPECTATIONS

- Maximum discomfort should occur in the first few days, improving each day thereafter.
- Bruising, swelling, numbness, and tightness and tenderness of skin for 10-14 days or longer.
- You will be given instructions for wearing a facial compression sling. This provides compression and support.
- You may experience tightness in the neck and difficulty turning side to side for 1-2 months.
- Skin may feel dry and rough for several months.
- Face may look and feel strange and be distorted from the swelling.
- Men have a need to shave behind their ears, where beard-growing skin may be repositioned.

APPEARANCE AND SCAR CARE

- Pale, bruised and puffy face for several weeks.
- Wearing scarves, turtlenecks and high-collared blouses masks the swelling and discoloration.
- By the third week, you will look and feel much better.
- Final result is not fully realized for approximately 6 months.

DRAIN CARE

- Empty drain bulb 3 times a day and record outputs in mL (milliliters) noting time of day and drain amount. Make sure to record each drain's output separately.
- It is normal for drain outputs to vary and for clots to be in tube and bulb.
- Do not disconnect bulb from tube.
- Do not push in or pull on the drain tube at its entrance on the skin.
- See additional attachment for more instructions and additional drain log.

FOLLOW UP CARE

- Your post-operative appointment will be scheduled before surgery for your convenience.

WHEN TO CALL

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects such as rash, nausea, headache, or vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.

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