



UTAH FACIAL PLASTICS  
Transformation you can Trust

## PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACELIFT / BLEPHAROPLASTY

### 3-4 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

- *Work and Recovery Arrangements.* Make any arrangements to be off from work or other strenuous activities while you are recovering from surgery.
- *Smoking.* Tobacco, cigarettes, and nicotine consumption will cause poor wound healing, longer healing times, and excessive scarring. We advise discontinuing these products more than 4 weeks prior to surgery.
- *Hair Care.* If planning to have your haircut or colored, please do so at least 1 week before and/or 4 weeks after surgery. Remove all hair extensions.
- *Final payment.* Your surgery must be paid in full 3 weeks before surgery and is often collected at the time of your pre-operative appointment.

### 2 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

- **DIET/SUPPLEMENT RESTRICTIONS:** Avoid foods, drinks and herbal supplements that can increase risk of bleeding and bruising. Avoid aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Motrin, blood thinners, vitamin E, omega-3, fish oil, and alcohol. Use Tylenol in place of other over the counter pain medications. Stop all alcohol use.
- *Vitamin C.* Begin taking 1000 – 3000mg per day as tolerated 2 weeks. Vitamin C aids in wound healing.
- *Fill Prescriptions.* These may include antibiotics, steroids, and/or pain medication for after the surgery as well as pre-medication to take prior to your procedure. Make sure you understand how and when to take all medications. We suggest keeping a notepad to keep track of the medications you have taken.
- *Retinol.* Stop using retinol in your skincare routine. You may begin using retinol once you are healed around 4 weeks after surgery.

### 1 WEEK BEFORE SURGERY:

- *Review Instructions with Caregiver.* Confirm who will be driving you to and from surgery and stay with you for at least 24 hours after surgery. Make sure they know the proper post-operative care for your procedure.

- *Arnica.* Start your Arnica tablets 1 day before surgery. You will not take your next Arnica tablet until immediately after your surgery.
- *Hair Extensions.* Have any false hair extensions removed, including lash extensions or strip lashes.
- *Meal prep.* Stock your kitchen with soups, crackers, smoothies, and any soft foods. Eating food that requires much chewing may be difficult after a facial procedure.

#### **NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY:**

- **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT OR SURGERY WILL BE CANCELLED.** This includes gum, water, black coffee, and candy. Surgery may be cancelled if this is not followed. If prescribed daily medications, the surgery center staff will discuss which medications to take the morning of your surgery with a small sip of water.
- *Arrival time.* The Surgery Center will call the day before surgery with the arrival time. If you don't receive a call or for further questions, call the appropriate number below:
  - Davis Hospital: (801)-807-7440
  - Lakeview Hospital: (801)-299-2160
  - Lone peak Hospital: (801)-545-8000
  - Utah Facial Plastics Draper location: (801)-776-2220
- *Shower.* The night or morning of surgery, take a shower and wash your hair. This will help reduce the risk of infection by eliminating bacteria. Arrive the day of the procedure with a clean face. Do not apply any makeup, moisturizers, hair sprays or gels, or nail polish.
- *Set Up Home Recovery Area.* This may include pillows, blankets, books, television, and anything else to assist with a comfortable recovery. Make sure commonly used items are moved to this area where they are easily accessible and within reach.
- *Relax.* Stay calm and get plenty of rest to avoid unnecessary stress.

#### **DAY OF SURGERY:**

- *Arrival to Facility.* Please arrive on time to your designated surgical location as stated by your patient coordinator. Make sure your trusted caregiver arrives and leaves with you. Remember to bring a photo ID and your form of payment for the facility co-payment.
- *Dress Comfortably.* Dress in comfortable, clean, and loose-fitting clothes. Shirts that can be buttoned or zipped up are preferred.
- Do NOT wear any makeup, jewelry, cosmetic creams, hair products, deodorant, sunscreen, remove all piercings and jewelry.
- *Contact lenses.* Do not wear contact lenses. Remember to bring your glasses to sign necessary paperwork.

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACELIFT / BLEPHAROPLASTY

### 24 HOURS POST SURGERY:

- *Facial Dressing.* You will have saline pads on your eyes to help minimize swelling and bruising, and your vision will be blurry due to the eye ointment placed in your eyes during surgery. A dressing is placed around the head and neck to provide moderate compression. Keep this dressing dry. Your surgeon or a staff member will remove the dressing at your post-op day 1 appointment. Attached to your head dressing are two small drains that collect excess fluids and help prevent infection. Drains will be removed at your post-op day 3 appointment.
- *Post-Operative Day 1 Appointment.* You must have a responsible adult drive you to your first office visit post-surgery. At this visit your surgeon or a staff member will remove your dressing and provide you with an elastic (ACE) wrap. It is important to wear the ace wrap as directed by a staff member and do NOT wear it tightly. Too much compression can cause skin breakdown in the neck or cheeks. The dressing is intended to be used as support, not as a compression wrap.
- *Head Elevation.* Sleep on your back with your head elevated about 30-40 degrees (2-3 pillows). Do not sleep on your side. Placing a pillow under your knees may help you from turning in your sleep. Head elevation helps to minimize swelling. Continue this for 2-3 weeks depending on swelling.
- *Physical Activity.* You may be up and moving around the house on the day of surgery and thereafter. However, avoid all strenuous activity. Getting up and moving around helps prevent blood clots from developing.
- *Facial Movement.* Keep facial/jaw movement to a minimum. Chewing, talking, and laughing should be minimized. Avoid turning your head and if you must turn, move the shoulders and head as one unit.
- *Breathing.* Take deep breaths often when you get home and for the first 24 hours after surgery. This helps to expand the base of your lungs.

### MEDICATIONS:

- *Antibiotic.* Start your antibiotic tablet after surgery and take all tablets as prescribed and until finished.
- *Pain Medication.* You will be prescribed a pain medication for post-operative pain control. If your discomfort after surgery is not strong you are welcomed to take Extra-strength Tylenol in place of the prescribed medication. Do not take the Tylenol with the pain medication, as most often the medication you are prescribed will have Tylenol in it. **Do not exceed 4,000 mg of Tylenol in a 24-hour period.** Take medication with food to minimize risk of nausea.
- *Constipation.* Sometimes decreased physical activity as well as pain medications may lead to constipation. Any over the counter stool softener such as Metamucil or Colace can be used. Start laxatives with the narcotic pain medications to prevent constipation from occurring.

- *Nausea.* Some pain medication may make you feel nausea. It is best to eat something small 20 minutes before taking pain medication. Keep hydrated with small sips of non-caffeinated beverages (ginger ale, Sprite, Gatorade).
- *Medication to Avoid.* Avoid medications containing aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Naproxen, etc.) for two weeks before and after surgery. These medications may increase bleeding.
- *Substances to Avoid.* Avoid alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine, for these will dramatically slow the healing process.

#### **NUTRITION:**

- *Diet.* A light low-sodium diet is best after surgery. Soft foods will be best to decrease excessive chewing that would lead to more swelling and discomfort. You may start a regular diet after your surgery if you are not feeling nauseated or vomiting.

#### **ACTIVITY:**

- *Movement is Important.* Make sure you are up and walking around immediately after your surgery. When lying down in bed or on the couch, make sure you are moving your legs and ankles. Movement helps prevent blood clots and promotes healthy blood circulation. Avoid bending at the waist, lifting, or straining in your face. If you have small children, bend at the knees, or sit on the floor and let them climb onto your lap. Overexertion may lead to bleeding and prolonged swelling.
- *Driving.* Do NOT operate a vehicle or make important decisions until you have been off pain medications for 24 hours. Driving is restricted for 3 – 5 days after surgery. Use good judgment.
- *Return to work.* Returning to work depends on the amount of physical activity and public contact your job involves and the amount of swelling and discoloration you develop; the average patient may return to work or go out socially 2 – 3 weeks after surgery. There is some individual variation regarding the time one returns to work.
- *Physical Activity.* Avoid bending, lifting, straining and aerobic activities for 3 weeks or until you've been cleared by your surgeon. Avoid hitting or bumping your face and neck.
- *Exercise.* Exercise may not be resumed for 3-4 weeks post-op or as further instructed by your surgeon. When cleared, you must start easy and build back up to your previous exercise levels. Resuming exercise may worsen swelling. Strenuous exercise can be resumed after 6 weeks.
- *Travel.* Airline travel is restricted until 1 week postop. You will notice increased swelling with airline travel, and this can happen 6-8 weeks out from surgery.
- *Face Care.* Cleanse your face gently with a mild soap twice daily after the first week, using a gentle upward motion. Do not use any harsh chemicals or crèmes on your face until all

incisions have healed and your surgeons has advised you can return to your normal skincare regiment.

- *Smoking.* Smoking should be strictly avoided as it interferes with the blood supply to the tissues and slows and hinders the healing process

#### **BATHING:**

- *Hibiclens Shampoo.* You may shower and gently wash your hair 24 hours after your drains are removed (**4 days after your facelift**), avoiding the incision areas. Use the Hibiclens shampoo as instructed.
- *Hair Care.* You may gently comb your hair with a large-toothed comb. Avoid aggressively tugging at hair knots or tangles. You may use a hair dryer to dry your hair only if it is set on the cool setting. No hair products (gel, mouse, hairspray, leave in conditioners, etc) may be used for at least a week.
- *Hot Tubs/Swimming Pools.* No hot tubs or swimming in pools until your incisions have healed, and approved by your surgeon, which is usually around 6 weeks.

#### **HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR INCISIONS:**

- *Cleaning your incisions.* Soak a Q-tip with a diluted solution of 50% hydrogen peroxide and water. Gently apply the Q-tip over your suture lines 2 times daily. Suture lines will be found in front of and behind your ears. It is not required to clean eyelid incisions. Then use a clean Q-tip or gauze to gently pat dry the incision line. Finally, apply a generous amount of antibacterial ointment with a Q-tip to keep all your incision sites moist. If your incisions are free of dried blood, you can skip cleaning and only apply a generous amount of antibacterial ointment (Bacitracin/Neosporin). Keeping your sutures lubricated with ointment are less painful to remove and allow the incision lines to heal with minimal scarring.
- *Crusting.* Occasionally crusting will occur around the sutures. Do not try to remove this yourself. This is normal and will resolve. Cleaning your incisions daily will minimize crusting.
- *ACE wrap.* Always keep the elastic ACE wrap in place after cleaning sutures and incision lines for the first 5 days after surgery. Days 5 – 12 after surgery the ACE wrap should be worn any time you sleep (naps and at night).
- *Cold compress.* Following surgery, cold compresses may be used over the eyes, cheeks, and neck to minimize swelling and control bruising. Ice packs **MUST** be lightweight. Only ice 5 minutes on, 5 minutes off for a maximum of 30 minutes in morning and night. Do not over ice as this can lead to skin breakdown. **If you are having a fat transfer, you can NOT ice the cheeks.**
- *Sun Exposure.* Avoid sun exposure as much as possible. This will optimize scar healing and minimize swelling. During the first year after surgery, it is crucial to use an SPF of 30+, cover your incisions with your hair or a sun hat when outdoors. Even mild sunburn can cause permanent discoloration, worsen swelling, and irritate an incision that is healing.

- *Suture Removal.* Do not attempt to remove sutures yourself. Your surgeon or staff member will remove all sutures at your follow-up appointments.
- *Makeup.* Do not use make-up for the first four days. When you begin to apply makeup, avoid application directly on healing incisions for at least 2 weeks.

#### **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

- *Swelling and Discoloration.* Swelling and bruising of the surrounding tissues can be expected. Swelling and bruising may worsen on the second and third day after surgery. It's not unusual for one side of the face to be more swollen than the other. This is temporary and will improve over the course of the next six weeks.
- *Bleeding.* Some mild bleeding is not unusual at the incision sites the first few days after surgery. If you try to do strenuous activity, sneezing, heavy lifting or bending forward, aggravated bleeding and swelling may occur.
- *Tightness.* Your neck and jaw will feel tight immediately after surgery. You may move your head and neck freely. Do not intentionally try to stretch your neck and jaw for the first 3 weeks after surgery. It will slowly loosen overtime.
- *Numbness.* It is common to have numbness of the cheeks, ears, and under the chin area that may last 3-6 months. Tingling and other odd sensations around incision lines are all to be expected and normal.
- *Lumpiness.* You may feel some lumpiness in your cheeks and neck. This is normal. It is expected to resolve within 3 – 6 weeks.
- *Pain and Itching.* Occasional sharp shooting pains or itching is normal and will resolve in a few weeks. Pain is subjective, but most patients describe a mild to moderate pain level after a facelift. Pain is worse at night and can be aggravated with stress.
- *Weak or Dizzy.* You may experience some weakness or dizziness. This may be more evident if you try to stand up too quickly. Take a minute to go from lying down to standing. The sensation of feeling lightheaded will get better in a few days. Make sure to drink plenty of fluids.
- *Depression.* You may experience a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This is related to the shock of seeing your face swollen and discolored. Remember this is temporary and once the healing process is completed you will begin to enjoy the results of your surgery. Try not to compare your recovery with others – everyone heals in their own way.
- *Scars.* After all stitches have been removed, the scars will appear a deep pink color. With time, the pink will fade and become white, the firmness of the scar will soften, and they will become less noticeable. Everyone varies with respect to healing, but it takes approximately a year for these changes to occur and the scars to look their best. After your incisions are healed, you may apply a Silicone based scar gel to your scar for enhanced healing.
- *Final Result.* Expect to see your final results between 6-12 months as the healing process takes time.

**EMERGENCY SITUATIONS – WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE OR GO TO THE HOSPITAL:**

- *Signs of Infection.* Spreading redness, worsening swelling, increased drainage or drainage of pus, worsening pain, and warmth at incision site. Temperature over 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- *Medication Reactions.* If you develop hives, rashes or itching you may be having a medication allergic reaction.
- *Other Emergency Situations.* Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chest pain, lightheadedness that does not quickly resolve, severe vomiting, pain, or asymmetric swelling in your legs.

**Utah Facial Plastics – (801) 776-2220**

Our office number connects to our 24-hour answering service after hours.

<b>APPOINTMENT TYPE</b>	<b>DATE / TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>PROVIDER/STAFF</b>
Surgery <i>Time TBD day before</i>			
Post-op day 1 <i>Dressing change</i>			
Post-op day 3 <i>Drain removal</i>			
Post-op day 5 <i>Suture removal</i>			
Post-op day 7 <i>Suture removal</i>			
Post-op day 10 <i>Suture removal</i>			
Follow up <i>3 – 4 weeks after</i>			