

Advanced Cosmetic Surgery and Laser Center
Post-Operative Instructions - page 1 (of 7)

Name _____

Name of Procedure: _____

Chart Number: _____ **Date of procedure:** _____

Introduction

The following instructions are based on experiences of past cosmetic procedures. We hope that they will answer many of the questions that will arise during the post operative experience.

Swelling and Discoloration

Every operation, no matter how minor, is accompanied by a varying amount of swelling and bruising of the surrounding tissues.

Expect swelling to reach its peak 48-72 hours after your surgery. It may also become more pronounced when you first arise in the morning. Generally, the swelling and discoloration are not serious and are temporary.

Swelling and bruising will vary from patient to patient. Everyone is an individual and heals at his/her own rate. Avoid comparing your post-operative course with others who have had this procedure. All swelling and discoloration ultimately subsides.

To Help Minimize Swelling and Discoloration

Stay upright (sitting, walking around) as much as possible after you return home. You should rest when you are tired.

Sleep with your head elevated 30-40 degrees for 1-2 weeks; use an additional pillow or two under your head. An airline pillow can be used, as well.

Avoid bending over and heavy lifting for one week. Besides aggravating swelling, this may raise your blood pressure and start bleeding.

Avoid hitting or bumping your face and neck. It is not wise to pick up small children or large pets and you should sleep alone for one week after your operation.

Avoid straining with a bowel movement, as this could raise your blood pressure. If you feel you need a laxative, get Colace from your pharmacy (no prescription required). Pain medication can cause constipation.

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To Help Minimize Swelling and Discoloration

Advanced Lift: Applying ice compresses (not an ice bag) across the cheeks for 20-minute intervals several times daily during the first 48 hours.

Blepharoplasty: Apply ice compresses made of gauze sponges or a “slush pack” to your eyes for 20-minute periods every 1-2 hours during the first 2 days following surgery. Be sure the plastic of the “slush pack” does not come in direct contact with the skin (we provide this the day of surgery). Generally, patients experience only minimal discomfort in the first 1-2 days following eyelid surgery.

Rhinoplasty: Apply ice compresses (not an ice bag) over the eye area for 20-minute intervals several times daily during the first 48 hours following surgery.

Medications

Pain medication has been prescribed and should be taken as needed. Take your pain medication with food to avoid any associated nausea. As soon as possible, switch to Extra Strength Tylenol to avoid the sensations of lightheadedness, drowsiness and nausea that may accompany prescription pain medication. Do not use aspirin or pain relievers that contain Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or Aleve, as they may cause bleeding.

It is important to continue taking the antibiotics for an entire week (until gone) in addition to the vitamins we recommend.

You may also be given prescriptions (as needed) to help you sleep and for anti-nausea, in addition to the pain relievers. Fill these prescriptions only if you feel you need them. It is not necessary to finish these prescriptions.

A Medrol Dose Pack may be prescribed to help reduce swelling.

Rhinoplasty Patients

There is usually a mild amount of discomfort and difficulty breathing associated with nasal surgery. Sleep with a glass of water by the bed. Sneeze with your mouth open.

If Bleeding Occurs

Elevate the head, do not bend over, apply ice compress and have someone call the office

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Daily Care

Advanced Lift

Cleanse the suture lines in front of, and behind, the ears with peroxide on a cotton swab 3 times a day for the first post-operative week, if blood appears. Apply a small amount of Bacitracin ointment to the incisions as well.

Blepharoplasty

Cleanse the suture lines above and below the eyes with peroxide on a cotton tip applicator three (3) times a day for the first post-operative week. Apply a small amount of Bacitracin ointment to the suture lines. Be careful not to get the peroxide or Bacitracin ointment in your eyes.

Rhinoplasty

You have had a nasal splint and dressing applied to your nose after your operation. This is to remain in place until your follow-up appointment in one week. You may shower but avoid getting the dressing wet, as this can cause problems with skin breakdown. If it becomes loose, please call the office.

A mustache dressing has been applied under the nose and can be changed when it becomes saturated. Avoid changing the dressing too frequently as it could aggravate bleeding. If a hemorrhage does occur, apply pressure and ice compresses use Afrin, and have someone call the office.

Nasal blockage is to be expected after nasal surgery and will gradually subside over time. This congestion is similar to a head cold, leaving patients unable to breathe directly through their nose during the first couple of weeks post-operatively. Although not painful, this could be somewhat uncomfortable for patients. Sleep with water by your bedside.

To help alleviate nasal congestion, begin using the Afrin nasal spray twice a day for the first three (3) days only. On the 4th day, begin irrigating the nose with a Saline spray four (4) times a day and continue this for one (1) week. You can expect more mucus drainage for several days. It will be blood-tinged and should not cause concern unless the drainage becomes bloody and flows profusely.

You may clean the outside of the nose and the upper lip with cotton swabs moistened with peroxide but do not rub too vigorously. DO NOT insert anything into the nostrils at this time.

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Resuming Activities - All Patients

You will need to arrange for someone to bring you to your first post-operative visit the day after your surgery.

You may shower and wash your hair with the gentle shampoo provided after your one-day post-operative appointment. Be sure the shower spray is soft and not forceful. You may blow dry your hair with the dryer on the "cool" setting.

Avoid pull-over clothing for two (2) weeks post-operatively. You should wear clothing that buttons or zips up the front.

The face may be gently cleansed.

No swimming, golfing for 2 weeks or strenuous athletic activity (Yoga/Pilates) for 4 weeks, or as per Dr. Mendelsohn.

Returning to work depends on the amount of physical activity and public contact your job involves. The average patient may return to work 5-8 days following surgery.

Generally, you may resume hair coloring and perming your hair 3-4 weeks following your surgery. Check with the nurse regarding your specific procedure.

Resuming Activities - Advanced Lift

A soft diet is recommended for the first several days post-operatively. Avoid foods that require excessive chewing for one (1) week.

You may wear glasses the day following surgery. Avoid having the arms of the glasses resting directly on the incisions around the ears for the first week post-operatively. Contacts may be worn the day following surgery unless you had eyelid surgery or a forehead lift along with your facelift.

Avoid turning the head or bending the neck for two (2) weeks post-operatively. When you must turn, move the shoulders and head as one until as though you have a 'stiff neck'. Do not "stretch" your jaw (example: biting into an apple).

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Resuming Activities - Blepharoplasty

Contact lenses can be worn one (1) week after upper eyelid surgery, two (2) weeks after lower eyelid surgery.

Eye shadow and false eyelashes should not be applied until ten (10) days after surgery.

You may tweeze your eyebrows two (2) weeks following eyelid surgery.

You can camouflage the discoloration around the eyes with make-up before you come to the office to get your sutures removed. Bring it near the incision line but do not apply over the incisions themselves until several days after the sutures have been removed.

Avoid any tanning of the face during the first thirty (30) days following your surgery. Wear sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat when going outside to protect your eyes from UV rays.

Resuming Activities - Rhinoplasty

Avoid sniffing and blowing your nose for ten (10) days following surgery. This causes pressure within the nose and could aggravate bleeding. After ten (10) days, when you can resume blowing your nose, do so by blowing through both nostrils. Do not attempt to obstruct (compress) either nostril while blowing your nose. **Sneeze with your mouth open.**

Avoid constantly rubbing the nostrils and the base of the nose with a facial tissue or handkerchief. This could aggravate swelling, cause infection, bleeding or the accumulation of scar tissue inside the nose.

Avoid sexual intercourse for two (2) weeks after your surgery.

Avoid excessive grinning and smiling. Avoid brushing the upper teeth too vigorously.

A soft diet is recommended (avoid foods that are hard to chew) and avoid hot (temperature and spicy) foods.

After your follow-up visit in one (1) week, you may begin to gently clean the inside of the nostril with a cotton swab moistened with mineral oil.

No diving or water skiing for two (2) months. No contact sports for two (2) years.

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Things that might occur during the healing period - For All Patients

It is not unusual for an individual to go through a period of mild depressions following elective surgery. It is best to adopt a positive attitude and divert one's attention to other thoughts.

After all sutures are removed, the scars will appear a deep, pink color. There will be varying amounts of swelling in and around the scars themselves, which may cause temporary unevenness of the edges of the incision, or lumpiness of the scars. With the passage of time, the firmness of the scar will soften, the pink edges will fade to white, and they will become imperceptible. Final scar maturation (to obtain a flat, smooth, fine line scar) will take 6 months to a year.

Things to Report

Bleeding	Any drug reaction - rash, hives, difficulty breathing
Sudden swelling or discoloration	Persistent temperature above 100 degrees
Discharge	

Things that might occur during the healing period - Advanced Face Lift

Any swelling usually begins in the cheek area and migrates to the jaw line and neck before gradual subsiding.

A snug dressing will be applied immediately following your surgery. This helps reduce any bruising and swelling that is likely to occur. After your first day post-op, some patients are asked to wear a supportive dressing (chin strap) when indicated by the doctor. You should wear this lighter dressing continually, except to shower, for three (3) days following your surgery, and then only at night when you sleep, for an additional week.

After surgery, parts of the face and ears may feel numb or have decreased or altered sensations. This condition gradually resolves itself over several weeks.

You may experience tightness in the cheek area in the first few weeks and/or months following surgery. As swelling subsides and the tissues relax, this tightness will resolve.

Following liposuction, there is continued breakdown of fat and healing of deeper tissues of the face. This may result in some lumpiness and contour irregularities, which will soften and improve over the first few months.

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Things that might occur during the healing period - Blepharoplasty

Rarely, the whites of one, or both, eyes may become slightly bloodshot. This is painless, and eventually absorbs.

Occasionally, small cysts, which resemble ordinary whiteheads, will appear beside the upper lid incisions. Like whiteheads, they will disappear after their contents are expressed in our office. They may also occur in the lower lids, but less frequently than in the upper lids.

Patients often experience some blurring of vision for 2 to 3 days after the surgery. This is generally due to swelling and/or ointments that have been used during the surgery, and will clear spontaneously.

Because the eyelid skin is so thin, it is very prone to swelling. Also, it takes at least nine (9) months after surgery to completely heal. Therefore, be reassured that your eye appearance will continue to improve.

Things that might occur during the healing period - Rhinoplasty Patients

When the bandage is first removed, the nose will appear distorted due to swelling of the nose and upper lip. This swelling begins to subside within the first two (2) weeks but may take six (6) to twelve (12) months to reach its final contour.

The upper lip may appear stiff for a while and you may feel that it interferes with your smile. This will disappear within a few weeks.

The tip of the nose sometimes feels 'numb' after a rhinoplasty, but this eventually disappears.

What to expect during your follow-up visit for Rhinoplasty

One week post-operatively, the splint will be removed from the outside of your nose. At this time, the inside of the nostrils will be cleansed. This should help alleviate the stuffiness you may be experiencing. Do not be too anxious to see your results. Your nose will still be swollen and appear distorted. This continues to improve in the coming weeks, with the final results in six (6) to twelve (12) months.