

## Pre and Post-Operative Instructions for Facial Surgery

### Charleston Plastic Surgery

For a speedier recovery, please follow these instructions:

- Someone must be with you for the first 24-48 hours following surgery. This is to make sure you are taking your medicine properly, to assist you when walking [if needed] and to get in touch with us [if needed]
- Post-Operative prescriptions will be filled and ready for you to take home the day of surgery. Please review the pharmacist's printed instructions as well as potential adverse reactions. *Please be sure to take your antibiotic until it is gone.*
- **NAUSEA:** Mild nausea is common after surgery. If you have moderate to severe nausea, please use Phenergan [suppository] as directed. If vomiting occurs, use ice chips until clear liquids can be tolerated. You may experience a sore throat after surgery. This is common after anesthesia and will clear up in a few days.
- **PAIN:** You will be given prescription medications AFTER surgery for both pain and muscle spasms. Starting the day after surgery, begin taking Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin/Aleve). You will take this for pain and to help reduce inflammation and swelling. When you are off the prescription pain medicine, you are welcome to increase the Ibuprofen dosage. You may take Tylenol if you are allergic to Ibuprofen or if you are not allowed to NSAIDS. Remember, narcotics may cause constipation, please drink plenty of water and make sure you are up and walking daily after surgery. You may use a stool softener if you have not had a bowel movement in 3 days. (Milk of Magnesia: take every 6 hours until you have a B.M.)
- **SMOKING:** No nicotine is tolerated at least 4 weeks prior to surgery AND for at least 8 weeks after surgery. Avoid all secondary smoke. *Nicotine will constrict blood vessels, leading to poor wound healing.*
- **DRIVING:** Do not drive a car or operate machinery for at least 24 hours and until you are no longer taking narcotics.
- **EXERCISE/ACTIVITY:** Make sure to **walk around the house the day after surgery** to prevent post-operative complications. Gradually work up to your normal daily routine. For the first 5-7 days, you should not lift/pull/push/twist anything greater than 10lbs and walking should be your only form of exercise. From weeks 2-6 post-op you should avoid lifting/pushing/pulling anything greater than 30lbs. Only exercise (walking) for 6-weeks post-op while recovering and until your doctor clears you.
- **REST:** You will need to sleep on your BACK and ELEVATED. [Use 2-3 extra pillows, a wedge, or you can sleep in a recliner] This will help reduce swelling and discomfort.
- **COMPLICATIONS:** If you experience a sudden fever of 101 or greater, increased swelling, redness, heat, or profuse bleeding please call our office [@ any time] for medical advice: **843-722-1985**

### Specific Instructions:

- **BROMELAIN:** We ask that you start taking Bromelain to prevent bruising. You will start this medication 5 days prior to surgery. It can be purchased at our West Ashley office.
- **ARNICA:** You will start taking Arnica the day after your surgery to help reduce bruising. It can be purchased at our West Ashley office.
- *Please refrain from talking for the first 24 hours following surgery.* Talking will increase your swelling.
- When you wake up from surgery, you will have a gauze head wrap in place over your head. This will be removed the next day, at your 1<sup>st</sup> post-op appointment with the MA/RN. Once the surgical wrap is removed, you will be instructed to go home and take a shower. You will have dried blood in your hair, this is normal, it will wash out in the shower. Please use BABY SHAMPOO only! NO conditioner or ANY

heat producing product. Be sure to use caution when combing or brushing your hair, you may have incisions in your hairline. You must wash your hair DAILY with baby shampoo for the first 10 days after surgery.

- You will also have a small suction drain in place after surgery. Please be sure to keep the drainage bulb compressed and measure/empty the drain [as needed] Further instructions will be given to you and your care giver on the day of surgery, at the Surgery Center. The drain is typically removed at your 1<sup>st</sup> post-op appointment.
- *Expect some bruising and swelling around your eyes, face, and neck for 7-14 days.* This is normal.
- **COLD COMPRESSES:** You will need to use a cold compress around the eyes for the first 24 hours after surgery. Please keep a cold compress on constantly until bed time. You may use cold compresses when you wake up, until noon the following day. You may use a gel pad or a bag of frozen peas. This will help decrease the swelling and bruising.
- **WARM COMPRESSES:** Warm will be started 48 hours following surgery to decrease bruising and swelling around your eyes. You may wet a wash cloth, wring it out as much as possible and heat it in the microwave for approximately 1.5 minutes. *Please test the wash cloth on your wrist to make sure it is not too hot to burn your face.*
- **SALINE EYE DROPS:** You may experience eye irritation or dryness following surgery. Please purchase moisturizing saline eye drops or artificial tears and use as needed. This is not required, just a suggestion if you have swelling around your eyes.
- *Your stitches (and staples) may be removed at varying intervals, but typically they are removed 1 week after surgery by the RN.*
- You will be given further instructions at your 1<sup>st</sup> post-op visit.