

Pre and Post-Operative Instructions for Facial Surgery

Charleston Plastic Surgery

You have undergone major 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 our 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.
- You may experience a sore throat after surgery. This is common after anesthesia and will clear up in a few days.
- NAUSEA: Mild nausea is common after surgery. If you have moderate to severe nausea, please use Phenergan as directed. If vomiting occurs, use ice chips until clear liquids can be tolerated.
- PAIN: You will be given prescription medications for pain, please take as directed on the bottle. Starting the day after surgery we want you to take Ibuprofen 200mg, 4 times per day if not contraindicated (ie – history of bariatric surgery). You will be taking this in addition to your prescription pain medication to help reduce inflammation and swelling. When you are off the prescription pain medicine during the day, you are welcome to increase the Ibuprofen to reduce inflammation/swelling AND for pain. Please do not exceed 3200mg of Ibuprofen per day. Remember, narcotics may cause constipation, please drink plenty of water. You may use a stool softener if you have not had a bowel movement in 3 days.
- SMOKING: No nicotine is tolerated at least 4 weeks prior to surgery and for at least 8 weeks after surgery. Avoid 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: Please be sure to walk around the house the day after surgery to prevent post-operative complications. Please be sure to have assistance when you first get out of bed. Gradually work up to your normal daily routine. For the first 4 weeks, you should not lift anything greater than 10lbs and walking should be your only form of exercise. Further lifting instructions will be given to you at your first post-operative appointment.
- REST: You will need to sleep 2-3 extra pillows. This will help reduce swelling and discomfort.
- COMPLICATIONS: Complications, albeit uncommon, may occur following any surgical procedure. These may include (but are not limited to) bleeding, infection, damage to surrounding structures, scarring, tissue necrosis, wounding, fluid accumulation (seroma), residual laxity of the skin, asymmetry, fat necrosis, contour irregularity, changes in skin sensation, DVT/PE or need for future surgery. If you experience a sudden fever of 101 or greater, increased swelling, redness, heat, or profuse bleeding please call our office for 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 incisions. This will be removed the next day, at your first post-operative appointment. Once 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 a natural shampoo and refrain from using 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 will also have 2 small suction drains in place after surgery. Please be sure to keep the drainage bulb compressed and measure as well as empty the drain when needed. Further instructions will be given to you and your care giver on the day of surgery. The drain may be removed at your first post-operative appointment depending on your drainage amount.
- You can expect some bruising and swelling around your eyes, face and neck for 7-14 days. This is normal but can be reduced by following Dr. Bossert's instructions.
- 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 may be removed at varying intervals, but typically they are removed in about a week.
- It is OK to use moisturizer on your skin about 1 week after surgery. We do not recommend utilizing formal scar gels or sheets over the incision line until about 6 weeks after surgery. Any scar gel or sheeting containing silicone is sufficient.
- You will be given further instructions at your first post-operative visit.