



Kavali  
Plastic Surgery

## **FACELIFT SURGERY - POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

You have just had an extensive and delicate operation on your face. The following information is intended for your well being and will assist you during your recovery period. It is not a substitute for my personal attention or interest in you. In fact, each operation receives special and individual thought. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Following surgery, you will go to the post-anesthesia care unit. A dressing over your face and neck will be in place. Following your operation, your tissues will react with swelling and a feeling of tightness, which will be responsible for discomfort. The incisions running from the temple, around the ear and back through the hairline were closed with some tension and will be tender for a time. The undercutting and pull to lift the face is responsible for numbness to the cheeks and ears. Usually these areas regain their sensation, but it does take some time.

The swelling and bruising in your face will leave in time but may settle in your neck and even your chest due to gravity -- this is expected. How quickly you get rid of your swelling and discoloration depends on your health and healing quality, as well as a quiet, careful and calm convalescence.

A facelift will naturally be stretched slightly by the early swelling. When this subsides, a little of the gain is lost. This may help to give your face a more natural effect. Although your appearance has been improved, your skin and features will continue to age naturally.

Support from family and friends is very helpful, but because they may not understand what is normally expected after surgery, their comments may unintentionally create emotional stress. I will tell you honestly how you are progressing. Please trust in this experience.

You may experience a period of let down or depression after cosmetic surgery. It is natural to question your decision to have surgery during the period after surgery. As you heal, this feeling will pass. If you feel depressed, understanding that this is a natural part of the healing process will help you.

Every one has the capacity to heal themselves to one degree or another. This ability depends on many factors including genetic background, your health and lifestyle (exercise, diet, smoking, drinking, etc). Dr. Kavali can assist in the healing process, but your cooperation and close attention is important.

Postoperative instructions and suggestions are designed to facilitate or promote your recovery. We are partners in this process. If the unexpected does occur, I will assist you as much as possible. Please feel free to speak with me regarding any concerns you may have.

To safeguard the result you have gained, it is recommended that you avoid excessive gain or loss of weight. In addition, ultraviolet exposure from the sun is very damaging to the skin. It is

advisable to use a #25 sunscreen on a regular basis. This is certainly advisable for at least the first year following surgery. You may use facial creams as desired.

Please have someone assist you to and from your car on the way home and fasten your seat belt. It is advisable that you not be left unattended for the first 24 hours. You should have someone help you undress and rest in bed. It is important to have a responsible person stay with you for the first 24 hours following your surgery. You should also have someone assist you to the bathroom and attend you closely for the first 24 hours following surgery, as sometimes there is weakness or lightheadedness following surgery.

**Wound Care:**

Following the removal of your dressing, gently apply Bacitracin or Neosporin ointment twice daily with a Q-tip to your suture line. This is an antibiotic ointment that can be purchased at any drugstore without a prescription. There may be some itching, but do not rub your incision as there is the risk of pulling open the incisions.

It is very important that you elevate the head of your bed to reduce swelling. It is advisable not to lie on your side, as this can cause uneven swelling. It is very important that you do not stoop or bend over for two weeks following your surgery. Watch carefully for signs of unusual swelling or painful firmness with black and blue discoloration. The face and neck normally show swelling and discoloration but should remain fairly soft. Do not hesitate to call me if there is any question about pain, swelling or bleeding.

**Makeup** is permissible after one to two weeks.

Do not make any important decisions or sign any important papers in the 24 hours following surgery, or anytime while taking pain medication. You may drive when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication and feel like you can react appropriately in traffic.

**Diet:** Begin with liquids and light foods (Jell-O, crackers, soups, etc.), gradually progressing to a normal diet.

**Medications:**

Have your prescriptions filled before your surgery. **Read the enclosed medication instruction sheet.**

You may resume your daily prescription medication UNLESS they are listed here:

You may use Tylenol if you wish. However vicodin, percocet, and other pain medications contain Tylenol. Thus, do not take these medications and Tylenol together as you may be taking too much Tylenol. Too much Tylenol can cause liver damage and other problems. If you are unsure about a particular medication, please call.

Call if you have any problem or question that concerns you. Do not make any important decisions or sign any important papers in the 24 hours following surgery, or anytime while taking pain medication.

**For questions or concerns:**

If you need immediate attention, or for some reason are unable to contact me, go to the emergency room nearest your home or at the hospital where you had surgery.

Some reasons to call:

Fever greater than 101.5 F taken with a thermometer

Pain not relieved by medication

Severe pain

Redness, warmth, drainage or odor from operative site

Bleeding (small amounts of oozing may be expected)

Persistent nausea and vomiting

If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding your condition or surgery

**Follow-up:**

You should already have a follow up appointment for sometime within the first week after surgery.