



NORTHEAST PLASTIC SURGERY  
CENTER

5 Davis Road East  
Old Lyme, CT 06371

info@northeastpsc.com  
www.northeastpsc.com

Tel 860.390.6000  
Fax 860-215-8150

**Vinod V. Pathy, MD, FACS**

**Charles Karcutskie, MD**

**Megan Phillips, PA-C**

**Hannah Chalmers, PA-C**

## **Facelift/Neck Lift**

### Post-operative Instructions

- ▶ You will go home the same day. Please ensure that an adult greater than 18 years of age takes you home and stays with you for the first 24 hours following surgery.
- ▶ When you awake from the operation, you will have drains behind your ears. These will be removed within a few days after surgery. You will have a dressing around your head and neck. Your surgeon will remove the dressing on the first visit and may replace it afterwards.
- ▶ Avoid lifting or dropping your chin above the neutral position or turning your head from side to side to keep from stretching your surgical site. It is preferable to keep your neck and chin in a neutral position, at roughly 90 degrees.
- ▶ You must sleep on the back of your head, with the head slightly elevated. Do not sleep on the side of your face, as this will put pressure on the sites of fat grafting, which can compromise the survival.
- ▶ It is common for patients to feel somewhat nauseous following their operation, so eat small, light, and easy to chew meals until you feel well.
- ▶ You should use ice water-soaked gauze pads over your eyes ONLY for at least the first 3 days, typically 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off while awake.
- ▶ Narcotics can make you feel nauseated if you take them on an empty stomach, so take them with a small amount of food.
- ▶ You have received prescriptions for \_\_\_\_\_ for pain relief. You should take Tylenol first for pain relief. If further relief is needed, you may take the narcotic. Please take Colace as a stool softener to limit constipation.
- ▶ Avoid the following anti-platelet agents until at least your first post-op appointment, including, but not limited to: ibuprofen products (Advil, Motrin), Aleve, Naprosyn, Celebrex, Toradol, fish oil, herbals, and supplements including those containing Vitamin E, as they result in a higher risk of bleeding.
- ▶ If you are taking the following blood thinners or anti-platelet agents, you should have already obtained instructions pre-operatively when they may resume, but please discuss with your surgical team: aspirin, Coumadin (warfarin), Lovenox, Plavix, Pletal, Effient, Aggrenox, Pradaxa, Savaysa, Xarelto, Eliquis, or Brilinta.

- ▶ Do not consume alcohol for 2 weeks following surgery, and especially when utilizing pain medications, muscle relaxants, anti-anxiety medications, sleeping pills, or other sedatives.
- ▶ Your face will be quite swollen and somewhat bruised following the operation. To reduce the swelling, expedite your healing, and achieve optimal results:
  - ▶ Sleep with your head elevated for 1 week or until your swelling has resolved.
  - ▶ No strenuous activity or exercise for 4 weeks.
  - ▶ No bending with your head below your knees for 4 weeks.
  - ▶ Avoid extremely salty foods like soy sauce, processed meats, and salty soups for 2 weeks.
  - ▶ Do not go into steam rooms or saunas for 2 months.
- ▶ It is okay to shower once the dressings are removed. Simply allow soap and water to run over the surgical areas and pat dry afterwards. No scrubbing.
  - ▷ Use Johnson's Baby Shampoo to limit irritation
- ▶ Do not apply makeup over your wounds for 2 weeks.
- ▶ Eat soft foods for 1 week following your operation to reduce the stretch on your neck and face. Avoid "hard to chew" foods, such as chewy food or meat
  - ▷ Do not chew gum for 3 weeks.
- ▶ Less talking for 5-7 days.
- ▶ Avoid sun exposure to your incisions for 12 months and apply sunscreen (at least SPF 50) when exposed to sunlight.
- ▶ No driving while you are on narcotics, or until you are able to react to an emergency situation.
- ▶ Please refrain from nicotine-containing products for at least 4 weeks following your surgery. Nicotine reduces circulation and can therefore result in wound healing impairment.
- ▶ It is common to have decreased sensation around the surgical sites, so be very careful to not burn yourself if you use a hairdryer.
- ▶ Every patient and procedure is unique. However, please alert us if you observe any of the following and are concerned:
  - ▷ temperature  $\geq 101.4^{\circ}\text{F}$
  - ▷ increased redness at the surgical site or adjacent site(s)
  - ▷ worsening bruising at the surgical or adjacent site(s)
  - ▷ blisters at the surgical site(s)
  - ▷ increased swelling or size leading to significant and sudden asymmetry
  - ▷ unremitting or increasing pain at the surgical site(s)
  - ▷ significant drainage at the surgical site