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Cosmetic Facial Surgery
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Patient/Representative

MD/Nurse

Date

POST OPERATIVE CARE OF YOUR SURGICAL WOUND

Taking care of your surgical wounds is important to your recovery. Please review the following instructions. You will be asked to sign this instruction sheet to acknowledge receipt and understanding.

If you need any clarification, please ask our staff to assist you before going home. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Zuravleff or our staff at (804) 934-9344.

Swelling is normal after any injury including surgery. Cold tends to prevent swelling.

- We recommend that you apply an ice pack to the surgical area for the 48 hours (while awake). (Frozen peas work well instead of ice!)
- Do not apply the ice directly to the wound; instead, apply a clean towel or washcloth to the wound and place the ice pack over the cloth. Alternate the ice on and off your wound for 20 minutes at a time.
- After 48 hours, it is best to not apply cold or heat for 24 hours. If cold improves comfort and relieves pain, it does not cause harm to continue for an additional day.
- By the fourth day, you should use warm compresses, alternating on and off your wound 20 minutes at a time. For the first 24 hours, you should rest with your head elevated with at least two pillows to also help reduce swelling.

Bruising is not unusual after your surgery. At first, the skin will look bright red or bluish-purple and will fade to a light brown or yellow after the first week. Often the bruising appears some distance away from the site of our surgery. This is caused by the gravitational spread of blood and not direct surgical injury to the distant tissues.

- If you had a brow or forehead lift, you may notice more bruising in your lower eyelids and upper cheek. Upper eyelid surgery may cause bruising to spread into the lower eyelids. Surgery in the mid-face may be noticeable to the jaw-line and neck.

Drainage/Discharge/Bleeding

- Light bleeding from the surgical wound may occur immediately following surgery. Gentle pressure with a cool compress should be applied. If bleeding persists or is heavy and uncontrolled, contact our office immediately.
- Collection of blood under the area of surgery (a *hematoma*) needs to be examined immediately by a doctor. Typically, a *hematoma* will cause the tissue to feel and look tight and will often be painful. A *hematoma* is to be confused with a bruise. A bruise should look more like the typical "black and blue mark" and is not tight to the touch.
- If your surgery involved the eye, you may notice a light, blood-tinged discharge from the eye in the first few days following surgery. You may also see mucus that tends to be stringy and off-white in color.
- Pus discharge, which is thick and creamy in color, redness, fever, and increased pain, are usually signs of infection and should be immediately brought to your doctor's attention.

Pain is a normal response after your surgery.

- As the anesthetic wears off, you may notice increased pain several hours after leaving the operating room.
- Bending over, straining or exertional activity may worsen the pain.
- We recommend Tylenol Extra Strength for pain. If you are expected to have more severe pain, your doctor will prescribe a narcotic pain-reliever.
- YOU SHOULD AVOID ASPRIN, IBUPROFEN, ALEVE AND ANY OTHER OVER-THE-COUNTER PAIN RELIEVERS FOR THE FIRST 48 HOURS AS THEY MAY MAKE YOU MORE PRONE TO BLEEDING.
- Tylenol does not affect your bleeding.

Medications

- Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic ointment or drop.
- Antibiotic ointments should be applied along the wound three times per day. If you are using ointment in your eye, be aware that it may blur your vision. Be sure that the ointment used in your eye has a label indicating “**ophthalmic**”. An ophthalmic ointment can also be used on the eyelid skin.
- Eye drops should be applied to the eye by gently pulling the lower lid away from the eye and placing the drop into the pocket. If your eyelids have been partially closed by the surgery you can apply the drop into the opening between the upper and lower eyelids. Close your eye without squeezing for several minutes after applying the drop.
- Take any oral medications as directed on the label.
- Take all of your regular medication as you did before the surgery, unless otherwise instructed.
- Be aware that narcotic pain-relievers may cause stomach tightness, nausea and/or constipation. This is often worsened when taken on an empty stomach.
- Report any rashes from ointments or unexpected effects from oral medications to your doctor immediately.

After tear duct surgery, nasal stuffiness is common. Tubes are often placed in your nose and mucous and blood may accumulate around them.

- Saline nasal spray can be purchased without a prescription and helps to loosen the mucous.
- Nasal decongestants such as Afrin nasal spray may help but should not be used for more than one week.
- Once you resume showering, the warm mist will also help loosen the mucous.
- If you need to clear your nose, lightly sniffle.
- **Do not blow your nose forcefully.**

General Anesthesia

- If your surgery required general anesthesia, you should avoid heavy meals for the first 24 hours.
- Clear liquids such as broth, apple juice, and ginger-ale should be taken for your first two meals.
- You may also feel more tired or a bit “run down” for several days after general anesthesia.

Cleaning of your wound should be done carefully and gently with a warm, clean washcloth.

- Gentle blotting, not rubbing, will prevent the sutures from being disturbed. Mattering of the eyelids is common after eyelid or eye surgery and can be cleaned with damp cotton balls or warm washcloth. Do not disturb scabs that may form on the skin. If the wound is in the scalp hair, you may carefully untangle the hair from the scab if it is bothersome.
- Avoid dusty, dirty environments.
- If you do not have a special dressing over your wound, you can shower the day after surgery. Do not direct the shower on the wound. You may want to shower from your neck down and sponge or sink wash your face and scalp to avoid disturbing the wound.

Avoid:

- Don't drive the day of surgery or while taking narcotic pain medications.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages for the next 24 hours or while taking narcotic medications.
- Do not make any important decisions or sign important papers for 24 hours.

Follow-up Appointments

- The timing of your follow-up appointment depends on the types of sutures or dressing that you may have from your surgery. Our office will call you at home to schedule your follow-up appointment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at (804)934-9344. Thank you.