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## **POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### *Face and Neck Lifting, Submentoplasty*

*In addition to the general post operative instructions you have been given, please follow these specific instructions for your procedure.*

1. **Appointments:** Return to the office the day after your surgery for your first post-op visit and dressing change. On the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> day, your first set of sutures will be removed. Additional sutures and clips will be removed 1 week post-operatively and all sutures are usually removed between 10 days to 2 weeks post-operatively.
2. **Sleeping:** Keep your head elevated above your heart at all times for 2 weeks post-operatively. When sleeping, keep your head elevated using at least 3 pillows or in a reclining chair. Sleep on your back. A travel pillow may be helpful to support your neck as well.
3. **Bruising/numbness:** Maximum bruising and swelling occurs 48 hours after surgery and most of it will resolve itself in 10-14 days. Areas of swelling and bruising are not usually symmetrical. There may be more on one side than on the other. This is normal. Due to gravity, bruising may occur on the chest as well. A certain degree of numbness may occur and may last from weeks to a few months. You may find one area to have more numbness than another, this too, is normal.
4. **Movement:** Avoid turning your neck from side to side and turn from the waist and shoulders for 6 weeks. This will decrease the strain placed on your neck muscles.
5. **Showering:** Gentle hair washing with tepid water may be done on the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> day. **Do not take hot baths, hot tubs or hot showers as this may cause bleeding.**
6. **Hair:** You may use a hair dryer but be careful not to burn yourself due to the decreased sensitivity after surgery. Place the heat setting on warm. If you color or perm your hair, please do so 10-14 days prior to surgery. You may process your hair again 4-6 weeks post-operatively. We recommend you do not cut your hair prior to surgery, as it will make it easier for you to cover incisions during the healing process.
7. **Misc:** Do not wear earrings for 4-6 weeks post-operatively. When speaking on the phone, do not pull your cheek skin. You should not drive for about 4-5 days after surgery. When you do drive, remember to turn from your shoulders and waist not your neck.
8. **Skin Care:** Cleanse the incision line with tepid water and a gauze pad or cotton tip. After cleansing apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly (Vaseline). This should be done 3 times per day. Other routine skin care may be resumed including facials 4-6 weeks after surgery. A mild moisturizer may be applied any time after surgery.
9. **Healing Process:** After the initial 2 weeks, you will notice that the healing process goes through many subtle stages. Usually all will be resolved with time and patience. It takes approximately 6-8 weeks for the tissues to heal inside. During this time, you will experience constant changes including decreased bruising, swelling, and numbness scar tissue formation and softening. You will also notice a decrease in tightness.