

Follow-up Care for Facelift or Neck Lift

Follow-up Care:

Follow all physician instructions carefully; this is essential for the success of your outcome. It is important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, swelling, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Personal and vocational activity needs to be restricted. Protective dressings and drains should not be removed unless instructed by your plastic surgeon. Successful post-operative function depends on both surgery and subsequent care. Physical activity that increases your pulse or heart rate may cause bruising, swelling, fluid accumulation and the need for return to surgery. It is important that you participate in follow-up care, return for aftercare, and promote your recovery after surgery.

Additional Surgery (Re-Operations):

There are many variable conditions that may influence the long-term result of your facelift. It is unknown how your tissue may respond or how wound healing will occur after surgery. Secondary surgery may be necessary to perform additional tightening or repositioning of body structures. Should complications occur, additional surgery or other treatments may be necessary. Even though risks and complications occur infrequently, the risks cited are associated with this surgery.

Other complications and risks can occur but are less common. The practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science. Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained. In some situations, it may not be possible to achieve optimal results with a single surgical procedure. You and your Kaiser Permanente surgeon will discuss the options available should additional surgery be advised. There may be additional costs and expenses for such additional procedures, including surgical fees, facility and anesthesia fees, pathology and lab testing.

Medications and Herbal Dietary Supplements:

There are potential adverse reactions that occur as the result of taking over-the-counter, herbal, and/or prescription medications. Aspirin and medications that contain aspirin interfere with forming blood clots, and therefore may contribute to more bleeding issues.

If you have a medical condition (such as heart arrhythmia, heart stent, blood vessels with blockages, or blood clots) and are taking medications to thin your blood and prevent clotting such as Plavix, Warfarin, Coumadin, Xarelto, Effient or Pradaxa, discuss management of these medications around the time of surgery with your plastic surgeon. Your plastic surgeon may sometimes coordinate a plan for these medications with the doctor that prescribed them for your medical condition.

If you have been prescribed drugs for a medical condition, do not stop them without discussing it first with your plastic surgeon. Stopping these medications abruptly may result in a heart attack, stroke, or death. Be sure to check with your physician about any drug interactions that may exist with medications which you are already taking. If you have an adverse reaction, stop the drugs immediately and call your plastic surgeon for further instructions. If the reaction is severe, go immediately to the nearest emergency room.

When taking the prescribed pain medications after surgery, realize that they can affect your thought process and coordination. Do not drive, do not operate complex equipment, do not make any important decisions and do not drink any alcohol while taking these medications. Be sure to take your prescribed medication only as directed.

Sun Exposure - Direct or Tanning Salon:

The effects of the sun are damaging to the skin. Exposing the treated areas to sun may result in increased scarring, color changes, and poor healing. Patients who tan, either outdoors or in a salon, should inform their surgeon and either delay treatment, or avoid tanning until the surgeon says it is safe to resume. The damaging effect of sun exposure occurs even with the use sun block or clothing coverage.

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Travel Plans:

Any surgery holds the risk of complications that may delay healing and your return to normal life. Please let your Kaiser Permanente surgeon know of any travel plans, important commitments already scheduled or planned, or time demands that are important to you, so that appropriate timing of surgery can occur. There are no guarantees that you will be able to resume all activities in the desired time frame. Allow at least 10 to 14 days to travel via airplane. Medications may be required should you have a long flight/ trip to prevent DVT/ PE in the immediate post-operative period.

Long-Term Results:

Subsequent alterations in the appearance of your body may occur as the result of aging, sun exposure, weight loss, weight gain, pregnancy, menopause or other circumstances not related to your surgery.

Interference with Sentinel Lymph Node Mapping Procedures:

Facelift surgery procedures that involve cutting through lymphatic tissue, similar to a breast biopsy, can potentially interfere with diagnostic procedures to determine lymph node drainage of the face.

Intimate Relations After Surgery:

Surgery involves coagulating of blood vessels and increased activity of any kind may open these vessels leading to a bleed, or hematoma. Activity that increases your pulse or heart rate may cause additional bruising, swelling, and the need for return to surgery to control.