

PATIENT INFORMATION FOR RHYTIDECTOMY (FACELIFT)

Facelift surgery can help rejuvenate a face by removing excess fat, tightening underlying muscles and lifting the skin to a more youthful position on your face and neck. Facelift surgery corrects sagging tissue of the jawline and neck, not fine wrinkles, crow's feet, or the lines around the lips. This surgery has minimal affect on the deep vertical creases that run between the nostrils and the corners of the mouth. Often women and men in their mid-forties to late sixties opt for a refreshed and vibrant appearance, so that they look more like they feel, rather than their actual age. This surgery is performed on people as early as the late thirties and as late as the mid-seventies.

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

Dr. Rotter will evaluate and assess the sagging skin of your face in conjunction with the laxity and position of the tissue. He may recommend a brow/forehead lift, eyelid surgery, chin or cheek implants, and /or laser resurfacing in combination with the facelift to achieve the desired results. It is important that you have a thorough understanding of the procedure, complications, pre- and postoperative instructions and recovery.

THE PROCEDURE

Facelift incisions are usually hidden in the natural folds and creases of the skin. They usually begin at the temples in the hairline and extend along the ear, around the earlobes, along the back of the ear and into the scalp behind the ear. If the neck needs extra attention, an incision may also be made under the chin along with the liposuction incision.

The skin is separated from the underlying tissues below. Fat will be suctioned from underneath the neck and chin to improve the neck and jawline. Dr. Rotter then tightens the muscle and skin placing the skin in its new position. He then trims the excess skin. The incisions are usually closed with dissolvable sutures or with staples. A special foam will be placed on your cheeks and on the neck going from ear to ear. You will have bandages on your incision areas and neck along with a facial garment or strap for compression.

Facelift surgery is done in the office and may take three to four hours. Generally, there is minimal to moderate discomfort during the postoperative period. Dr. Rotter recommends extra strength Tylenol, if needed. Some patients experience absolutely no discomfort at all.

ANESTHESIA

A facelift is performed under local anesthesia along with oral sedatives. The type of anesthesia used is tumescent solution. The solution is injected under the skin, the fat absorbs the fluid thereby numbing the area. This fluid causes bloating; what does not drain out during the procedure will drain through the open incision sites in the initial post operative days.

BEFORE SURGERY

- **Discontinue smoking**, use of alcohol, and **STOP TAKING VITAMIN E AND ANY MEDICATIONS CONTAINING ASPIRIN OR IBUPROFEN TWO WEEKS BEFORE AND AFTER YOUR SURGERY**. Some herbs may need to be stopped as well.
- Supplies needed to dress the incisions: bacitracin or polysporin, hydrogen peroxide, ice packs or bags of frozen peas. We will supply the facial garment that you will wear 4 - 5 days after the surgery.
- **Prescriptions** should be filled prior to surgery, bring them with you the day of surgery.
- You may color your hair up to 1 day prior to surgery. It will be about four to six weeks until you can color or have a perm again. You might want to leave your hair long to cover the incisions until they heal.
- Shower the night before using antibacterial soap.
- No sunbathing or tanning beds. After surgery, if you must be in the sun, protect your face with sunblock and a hat.
- Bring a scarf with you to cover the bandages when you leave.
- Most people will want to take a week off of work. **You will want someone to drive you home!**

WHAT TO EXPECT

DRAINAGE will occur for one to two days, the tumescent fluid will drain from the incision sites. Bandages should not be touched until Dr. Rotter has removed your garment and foam pads (usually 4 days after the procedure).

BLEEDING: You may experience a little bleeding from incisions in the first 2 or 3 days, usually not significant. Use moderate pressure to stop the bleeding. If there is a problem, page Dr. Rotter.

PAIN: You should have minimal discomfort. The treated areas may “burn” or “sting” for the first 2 or 3 days. Tylenol® or other acetaminophen pain reliever should be all that you need. If stronger medicine is needed, please call Dr. Rotter. **NEVER TAKE ASPIRIN, MOTRIN®, ADVIL® OR SIMILAR PAIN RELIEVERS!**

INCISIONS: A facial garment and foam pads are worn for compression until Dr. Rotter removes them, usually after four days. **After** the facial garment and foam pads **are removed by Dr. Rotter** the incisions should be cleaned with hydrogen peroxide and a thin film of antibiotic ointment should be applied to the suture lines for three days.

SUTURES: Dissolvable sutures are usually used. Sutures dissolve in approximately 5 – 10 days. You can apply makeup 10 days after the surgery. Staples are removed in the office 10 days after surgery.

SWELLING : Swelling will occur over your face and neck area for the first few weeks. The swelling increases the first few days, the third day being the worst. The swelling will be most pronounced upon awakening. It will lessen daily after day three. The swelling can last, on average, anywhere from 5 days to several weeks but usually most swelling diminishes the first week. It is helpful to sleep propped up on pillows- try not to lay flat for the first few days. Keep your head elevated above the level of your heart at all times. Bruising will last 7 to 10 days but can last several weeks. Bruising and swelling may drop, via gravity as low as the chest area.

COLD COMPRESSES (ice packs or frozen peas) - use for 20 minutes at a time for personal comfort.

NUMBNESS will occur in the areas treated for eight to twelve weeks. Be careful when using a hair dryer or curling iron, because you may not feel the heat.

AVOID excessive talking, laughing, and heavy chewing (stay on a soft diet).

GENERAL CARE

1. WOUND DRESSING

FOAM PADS will be applied to the neck and cheeks at the end of the procedure, as will a garment to hold the foam in place. These **ARE NOT** to be removed until your first post operative visit. Dr. Rotter will remove them at this time. You, the patient do not need to do anything until after the dressings are removed by Dr. Rotter.

When Dr. Rotter removes the dressings apply antibiotic ointment to the incisions after cleaning with hydrogen peroxide. Apply a thin film on all incisions around the ear and scalp

2. BATHING: You may shower after Dr. Rotter removes the dressings. Do not let the shower hit directly on your incisions.
3. EXERCISE: NO EXERCISE FOR 7 DAYS! NO BENDING OVER OR HEAVY LIFTING FOR 7 DAYS!
4. COSMETICS USE: You may use cosmetics on your face after 7 days. Do not use aloe or vitamin E products for 2 weeks.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

1. INFECTION: Infections are uncommon, but can occur. Let us know if you develop a high fever or a marked change in the swelling of your face.
2. HEMATOMA: These will look like bruises but will be very hard and have some discomfort.
3. WOUND SEPARATION: Occasionally the incisions will separate before they are completely healed (usually because you unconsciously rub your scalp or ears while sleeping). Most often the separation is too small to treat and will close itself, just keep the area greasy with ointment.

YOUR FIRST POSTOPERATIVE VISIT WILL USUALLY BE FIVE DAYS AFTER YOUR SURGERY

KEY POINTS

- ◆ KEEP HEAD ELEVATED
- ◆ NO BENDING OR LIFTING OR STRAINING
- ◆ NO EXERCISE
- ◆ WATCH FOR EXCESSIVE BLEEDING OR PAIN
- ◆ TAKE ONLY TYLENOL OR PRESCRIBED PAIN RELIEVERS
- ◆ WEAR FACIAL GARMENT **UNTIL REMOVED BY DR. ROTTER**
- ◆ USE YOUR ANITBIOTIC OINTMENT AS DIRECTED
- ◆ KEEP YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE LOW

IF YOU ARE HAVING ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS CALL THE OFFICE, OR IF AFTER HOURS YOU MAY
CONTACT DR. ROTTER AT 301-807-8807