



John M. Hilinski, M.D.
San Diego Face and Neck Specialties
4111 Randolph Street, San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 296-3223

GUIDELINES FOLLOWING FACELIFT

- During the first 24-48 hours following surgery, we recommend that a friend or family member remain with you to assist with your needs.
- You will awake with a bandage wrapped around the face and neck.
- Sleep with the head elevated 20-30 degrees.
- For several weeks it is important that you do not turn your head toward your shoulder on either side. Instead, you should attempt to move your head and shoulders as one unit when looking to the side. You should also try as much as possible to avoid moving your head up and down.
- Start with a liquid or soft diet during the first 1-3 days and transition to a normal diet thereafter.
- Begin taking the pain medication and antibiotics as directed. You should always have something in your stomach when taking the narcotic pain medication to help minimize chances of nausea and vomiting. Continue taking Arnica as directed for another week after surgery. Continue to refrain from using any medication on the restricted medication list.
- You will need to keep your bandages clean and dry. These will be changed 24-48 hours after surgery but generally left in place for 4-5 days following surgery.
- You will be unable to wash your hair until Dr. Hilinski allows you to change the bandages yourself. You should not chemically treat your hair for at least 4 weeks following surgery.
- It is normal to note some skin discoloration (bruising) beneath the bandages, particularly along the neck region. It may take 10-14 days for the discoloration to subside entirely.
- Once you begin to change the bandages on your own, you should apply over-the-counter Bacitracin ointment twice per day to the incisions. This includes application behind the ear but you must do so without pulling the ear forward. Remember to place ointment beneath the chin if Dr. Hilinski made an incision in this area. The ointment should be sufficient to avoid any scabbing of the incision line. If scabbing does occur, do not try and pull them off. Let the ointment gradually encourage the scabs to fall off on their own. Preventing them from forming altogether is best.
- You may experience areas of hardness once the bandages have been removed. These areas typically soften up within several weeks. Tightness is also normal and will usually subside within the same time period.
- Numbness around the lower face and ears is normal and may persist for several weeks to months. Be careful to avoid burning your skin in these areas, for instance, with a blow dryer.
- Confirm a follow-up appointment with Dr. Hilinski's office for 24-48 hours after surgery for the initial bandage change. A second follow-up appointment should also be scheduled for 5-6 days after surgery. At this second visit the sutures are typically removed.
- Call our office in the meantime if you have any additional questions or concerns.
- In case of an emergency, call 911 for immediate assistance.