

# WESTCOUNTRY

PLASTIC SURGEONS

of Washington University

Patient Information for :

*FACELIFT*

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Surgery Scheduling Secretary/Dr. Tenenbaum – Carol – 314-996-3040  
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Marilyn Bennett and Patty McCune

OR DAY/TIME : \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_ ARRIVAL TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

During office hours, questions can be answered by our office staff at 314-996-8800. During off hours, please call Barnes hospital at 314-362-5000 and ask for the “Plastic Surgery Resident on call.”

Please note that our website ([www.westcountyplasticsurgeons.wustl.edu](http://www.westcountyplasticsurgeons.wustl.edu)) has detailed descriptions of most procedures. This form is available from our website by navigating to: Patient Resources > Patient Forms.

## BEFORE SURGERY

### SIX WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. **Smoking affects healing.** Please **try to stop smoking or ANY nicotine products for at least 6 weeks before surgery and one month after.** If needed, we can prescribe Chantix to help you quit.
2. **Good nutrition can help optimize wound healing and speed your recovery from plastic surgery.** To reduce the risk of problems, please be sure to consume a high protein diet and appropriately supplement any vitamin or dietary deficiencies that you may have.

## TWO WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Some medications can interfere with anesthesia and cause undesirable side effects that could affect your surgery. Please read over the enclosed **“Medication and Supplement Alert List”** and let us know if you take any of them. For example, **garlic** and **ginseng can cause bleeding** even though they are homeopathic remedies and not true medicines. So please stop taking these, and any other non-prescription herbal medicines for two weeks before surgery. Also, **Aspirin** or **Plavix** should not be taken for 2 weeks before or for 2 days after surgery. **If you take these medicines for a pre-existing history of cardiac stents, stroke, clotting disorder, or other risk factors please let us know so we can work with your cardiologist or internist to ensure that facelift surgery can be conducted safely.** Tylenol is a good medicine to take for any aches or pains you may have prior to your surgery.
2. If you develop a cold, facial sore, or any other illness prior to surgery, please notify us.

## EVENING BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Have some jello and/or soup available for after surgery. Make sure you have meals stocked in the freezer/cupboard so you don't have to do any shopping after surgery.
2. Get a good night's rest.
3. Do not eat or drink anything if your surgery is scheduled before noon. If your surgery is scheduled after noon, you may have coffee or tea and dry toast no later than 8 hours before your scheduled surgery time. **DO NOT SMOKE.**

## DAY OF SURGERY

**Be at the Hospital at:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do not wear contact lenses, wigs, hairpins, hairpieces or jewelry. Dress in old, loose, comfortable clothes. Do not wear pullover tops or pantyhose. Remove all body piercing jewelry from all locations. Wear slip-on shoes.
2. Have someone drive you to your surgery and make certain someone will be available to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours. Put a pillow and blanket in the car for the trip home.

## AFTER SURGERY

1. **Positioning.** After surgery, it is best to lie in a reclining chair. Alternatively, you may lie in bed with your shoulders elevated by pillows while keeping your neck straight. Avoid bending forward or turning side-to-side at the neck for the first week.
2. **Facial movements** (smiling, talking, chewing, yawning, etc.) should be kept to a minimum for the first week.
3. **Early activity.** For the first week, please avoid any type of straining. You should get out of bed with assistance if you need to strain. Easy walking after surgery is a good thing, and while you are in bed, flex your feet and legs a couple of times every hour while you are awake. Avoid turning your head to either side, as this will pull on the stitch lines. To turn, move your head and shoulders as a unit.

4. **Strenuous activities** should be avoided for 2 weeks. After that, gradually increase your activities so you are back to normal by the end of the third week.
5. **Sun exposure and sunscreen.** The skin of your face is sensitive to sunlight after surgery. Protect your facial skin from excessive exposure to the sun for 8 weeks. Wear wide brim hats and sunscreen (SPF 30 or greater) if you have to be in the sun for prolonged periods. Excellent sunscreen options are offered through our various skin care lines.
6. **Pain control.** If you have pain or discomfort take the pain medication every 4 hours. It is best to take pain medication with crackers, jello, etc. If you have no pain, do not take the medication. Alcohol and pain medication should not be taken together.
7. **Diet.** A light diet is best for the day of surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or jello. You can start a regular diet the next day.
8. **Drains.** You may have drains in place under the skin after surgery. These will be secured but avoid pulling on them. The bulbs connected to the end of the drains should be kept compressed at all times. Instructions regarding the drains will be given to your caretaker.
9. **Incision care.** Two days after surgery, you may start cleaning along the stitch lines, in front of and behind the ears and under the chin, with half strength hydrogen peroxide (dilute with water) twice a day. Apply a thin layer of polysporin ointment to these areas after cleaning. Starting 4 days after surgery, please just use soap and water to gently clean your face. You may get your incisions soapy and wet but just pat clean and dry. *Dove* is a good choice for soap.
10. **Monitoring bruising and swelling.** You can expect some swelling of the cheeks and jawline after surgery. If the swelling on one side is **definitely** more pronounced than on the other side, or if you are having pain which is not relieved by the pain medication, please call the office. If you have new bruising that starts several days after surgery, please call the office.
11. **Contact lenses** can be worn when the eyes start feeling normal and the majority of the swelling has subsided. This is approximately 1 week after surgery. If it is necessary to pull down on your eyelid to insert the contacts, they should not be worn for 10 days. Glasses can be worn until then.
12. **Washing your hair.** After your dressing and drains have been removed you may wash your hair with baby shampoo. Lather your hair gently using the palms of your hands and rinse thoroughly until the soap is out. It may take several washings before all the crusts are out of your hair. Do not use hairsprays, conditioners, gels, etc. while the stitches are in place.
13. **Drying your hair.** Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on cool, **not a hot**, setting. Or just let it dry on its own after gentle toweling.
14. **Coloring your hair.** Hair coloring should be delayed until 3 weeks after surgery, when healing is completed and no crust remains.
15. **Remember, DO NOT SMOKE until your doctor tells you it is okay. This is very important. Smoking, or any nicotine product (such as a *nicotine patch* or *nicorette gum*) must also be avoided for one month after surgery. Smoking and other nicotine products will dramatically increase the risk of wound healing problems and wide scar formation.**

# RETURNING TO WORK

1. Working from home : Less than 1 week.
2. Desk job : 1 to 2 weeks
3. Up on your feet a lot : 2 to 3 weeks
4. Manual labor : 3 to 4 weeks

# GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Your face and neck will feel tight and there will be a feeling of numbness in these areas for several weeks to months after the surgery. This will disappear and the feeling will return.
2. The scars and any are areas of bruising can be massaged with a moisturizing cream, vitamin E, or aloe vera cream starting 3 weeks after surgery. This will promote early softening and maturation of these areas.
3. **Cosmetics** can be worn on the face as early as 3 days after surgery. However, eyelid or eyelash cosmetics should not be worn until 2 days after all the eyelid sutures have been removed. There may be a feeling of numbness of the eyelids that will subside with time.
4. **Strenuous activity/heavy lifting** of objects greater than 10 lbs should be avoided for 3 weeks.
5. Please take all medication carefully and as directed.
6. If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call the office.
7. If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101°F), redness or increased pain at the surgical incisions, please call us immediately.

# FOLLOW-UP

Follow-up after surgery varies based on the extent of the procedure, any pre-existing health conditions you may have, how far away you live, and in the unusual event where there is a complication.

For many patients follow-up includes:

- a) Follow-up 2-5 days after surgery with registered nurse or physician's assistant and/or physician to pull drains, check wounds, and to address any minor questions or concerns
- b) Physician follow-up at 3 weeks, 3 months and 1 year and to address any concerns

# PRESCRIPTIONS

We will try to provide you with prescriptions for medicines prior to your surgical procedure. Usually this will include a pain medicine and sometimes an antibiotic.

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