

Post-Operative Instructions

Facelift

Following your surgery, it is important that you follow Dr. Shaddix's post-operative instructions. If you have any questions regarding these instructions or any other aspect of your care, please call our office at (850) 476-7100.

General

- You must arrange for someone to drive you home after surgery and to help you care for yourself for at least the first 24 hours after you return home. You cannot be left alone for the first 24 hours after discharge.
- It is important to relax after surgery. You will have less energy than usual for the first few days. Your body needs rest to heal.
- Do not drive or operate machinery for 24 hours after surgery.
- Do not make major decisions, sign contracts, etc. for 24 hours after surgery.
- Depending on your job, you should be able to return to work after 5-7 days. You may need more time if your job involves significant physical activity or public contact.

Medications

- For the first two weeks after surgery, do not take aspirin or other NSAIDs (Bufferin, Anacin, Excedrin, Aleve, Ibuprofen, Motrin, etc.)
- Please remember that the pain medication prescribed by Dr. Shaddix contains Tylenol. It is NOT safe to take regular Tylenol at the same time you are taking the pain medication.
- When taking the prescription pain medication, you should not drink alcohol or drive a car.
- The pain medication may make you drowsy or give you an upset stomach. If this is the case, ask Dr. Shaddix about alternative medications.
- Take your antibiotic until it is all gone.
- Nausea is rare after facelift surgery. If it does occur, please take the anti-nausea medication.
- If you take regular medications, ask Dr. Shaddix when it is safe to resume taking them.
- It is important to have a bowel movement within a day or two after surgery. If you do not, you may take an over the counter stool softener or laxative to help.

Activity

- Keep your head elevated for 1 week after surgery. Many patients elect to sleep in a chair or recliner. If in a bed, use extra pillows.
- Minimal activity for the first 48 hours. No house cleaning, furniture rearranging, or yard work. Relax, be pampered, and let your body heal.
- Avoid bending or straining and limit lifting, pulling, or pushing for the first week after surgery.
- No heavy lifting (greater than 20 pounds) for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Avoid strenuous exercise for 2 weeks after surgery.



- You should be walking around on the evening of surgery and frequently thereafter.
- Move and pump your legs and feet frequently when sitting and lying down.
- Wait about 2 weeks after surgery before having sex or doing anything to raise your blood pressure substantially.

Diet

- You may resume your regular diet right away. However, eating foods that are bland and soft for the first couple of days may be best tolerated. You must eat more substantial foods than just crackers and juice or you will continue to feel weak.
- Increase your fluid intake in the first couple weeks after surgery. Water and sports drinks with electrolytes are good. Having straws available and using them will encourage you to drink more fluids.
- During the first couple of weeks of your recovery, avoid excess alcohol consumption as this can make you dehydrated. Avoid alcohol completely for the first 48 hours after surgery.

Incision Care

- Gently cleanse the suture lines twice daily with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip. This will help loosen any crusting that may occur along the incision.
- It is safe to shower or sponge-bathe on the second day following surgery. You may allow your incisions to get wet. Do not immerse or soak your wounds.
- You may experience some oozing or slight bleeding along the suture line. Do not rub the area, but instead apply gentle pressure using a gauze pad. If this does not stop the oozing, call Dr. Shaddix.

Things to Avoid

- Avoid makeup until one full day after the sutures have been removed.
- Avoid pullover clothing. For the first week, wear clothing that fastens in the front or back rather than items that must be pulled over your head.
- Avoid anything that could cause inadvertent trauma to your incisions. These include contact sports, small children, pets, and restless bedmates. All of these things can bump your face and disrupt your incisions.
- Do not smoke or allow yourself to be exposed to second-hand smoke.
- Do not stay in bed all day. Walk frequently.
- Do not swim in a pool/lake/river/ocean for 4 weeks following surgery.
- Saunas, steam baths, and hot tubs should be avoided for 6 weeks following surgery.
- Do not tan your scars for the first year following surgery because they may tan darker than the surrounding skin. This darkness, if allowed to occur, may be permanent. In general it is safe to begin using sunscreen on your incisions 3 weeks after surgery. You should cover your incisions with sunscreen during the first year after surgery. Tanning beds should be avoided.
- You may wash your hair with shampoo the day after surgery. However, chemical treatments such as hair coloring and permanent wave solutions should not be applied for 6 weeks after surgery.
- Facial makeup and creams may be applied when desired. Be careful to avoid suture lines.



Things to Look For

- Report any severe pain, sudden swelling (especially only on one side), or increasing discoloration to Dr. Shaddix immediately on his cell phone number that will be provided to you on the day of surgery. Should the face begin to swell abnormally fast or begin to throb from pressure, it is an emergency.
- If you develop a fever of 101°F or greater, increasing pain, redness around the incisions, or concerning drainage from the incisions, call Dr. Shaddix immediately

Things to Expect

- Your face will be slightly swollen and may be bruised. The swelling typically resolves in the first 3-4 days whereas the bruising may take up to 2 weeks to resolve.
- The feeling of tightness, especially in the neck, is normal over the first several days.
- Discomfort will be greatest during the first 24 hours. Thereafter, you will require less pain medication.
- Scars may become reddened before they fade. This is normal.
- Any unevenness of the edges of the incision or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary and will subside with time.
- Numbness of the face and ears may occur after surgery. Feeling will return with time.

Follow-up

- Dr. Shaddix would like to see you in clinic the day after your surgery for drain removal (if you have a drain.) Otherwise, he would like to see you again 1 week after surgery. This appointment is typically prescheduled, please reach out to our office if you are unsure about the date and time.
- Dr. Shaddix would like to see you again 3 weeks after surgery and then again at 3 months.
- Please remember that we are here for you to answer any and all questions, no matter how small. If you have a question, it is likely that we have the answer.

