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### **After Facial Aesthetic Surgery**

You should be up walking with assistance on the evening of surgery and as much as possible daily thereafter. Try to ambulate each hour while awake. Do not spend hours at a time lying or sitting and avoid crossing legs at all times. These practices will minimize the chance of developing blood clots in the legs (deep venous thrombosis or DVT), a potentially very serious condition.

It is important to minimize active facial expression for the first two weeks in order to allow the underlying facial structures to heal properly. *Keep talking and laughing to a minimum.* Avoid turning your head to the side. Instead, twist at the waist, turning the head and body together as a unit. When sitting up place your hand behind your head to help raise the head without straining the neck muscles. Keep your head elevated at all times for the first week. In addition, sleep with your head elevated on several pillows, keeping your neck straight. A U-shaped travel pillow is helpful to support your neck after surgery. Do not lie on your side for the first two weeks. Bending at the waist should be avoided for two weeks after surgery. Instead, bend at the knees while keeping the back straight.

Continue to take the Arnica and Bromelain for two weeks. Do not take drugs on your “Medications to Avoid” list for two weeks. Remember not to smoke at all for at least three weeks although abstaining for six weeks is optimal for proper wound healing. Begin taking your antibiotic when you get home from surgery and continue as directed for one week. Take your prescription pain medication every four to six hours as needed but switch to Tylenol as soon as possible. Constipation can occur after surgery due in part to narcotic pain medications. Increase your intake of water, fruits, and fiber to help prevent this. Milk of Magnesia or Colace (both available at pharmacies over the counter) are often helpful if constipation persists. Substituting Tylenol (acetaminophen) for your prescription pain medication will also help prevent constipation.

Cold compresses should be placed over the face for the first twenty-four hours following surgery. Your private duty nurse will do this for you. Doing this longer than twenty-four hours is not generally beneficial although it poses no harm. Please purchase the items under “Facial Surgery” on your “Suggested Shopping List” to use for this purpose.

Plastic drains and a soft dressing will be placed at the conclusion of surgery and will stay in place for up to forty-eight hours. Your private duty nurse will remove these for you at the appropriate time. You may be required to wear a chin strap after one week. You will be informed during your postoperative visit if this will be necessary in your case. The strap will be

provided by our office. An appointment will be made before you leave the office on the day of surgery for your first visit one week later.

Bruising and swelling are expected and are normal following surgery. Most swelling occurs on the sides of the face, ears, and cheek areas. Bruising and the majority of the noticeable swelling usually resolve by two weeks, although subtle swelling can last for months. There are normally feelings of tightness in the neck, numbness in the cheeks, and generalized discomfort of the face and neck. However, there is typically little actual pain. Your ears may be either very sensitive or numb. Most patients feel that they look presentable by two weeks from surgery and go back to work by three weeks. The cheeks may feel lumpy in places in the first few weeks after surgery. These changes will gradually resolve over several months, sometimes lingering longer.

You may shower forty-eight hours after surgery. It is important to allow warm water to run through your hair. You may wash your hair three days after surgery. Use a mild shampoo such as Johnson & Johnson's Baby Shampoo. It is best to do this in the shower holding your head back and taking care to not get shampoo in your eyes. Do not wash your hair by bending over a sink. Do not massage the scalp and be careful as you wash around the surgical clips. Do not pull your ears away from the head. Use a wide-toothed comb and either let the hair dry naturally or use your hairdryer on a cool setting. Do not use hot hair rollers or a curling iron for two weeks. You should not color your hair for one month.

Eat a soft diet, avoiding meat and other foods that require strong chewing for at least one week. Foods such as yogurt, fruit shakes, mashed potatoes, soups and scrambled eggs are good choices during this time.

Wear button-down shirts or blouses for the first week after surgery in order to prevent inadvertent pulling on the ears. Eyeglasses can be worn after surgery but may not feel comfortable resting on the ears. Do not wear pierced earrings for three weeks.

You may fly ten to fourteen days after your surgery. Driving is discouraged for two weeks because extreme head turning is sometimes required. You may also return to sedentary work and cautiously resume sexual relations after two weeks.

After two weeks you may gradually resume light exercise such as brisk walking, using an exercise bike, or light weight lifting (5-10 lbs.). At three weeks you can resume most normal exercises but heavy weight lifting, impact exercises, yoga, pilates, and contact or ball sports should be avoided for at least six weeks.

Dental work should be avoided for six weeks.

### **Skin Care**

It is best not to disturb the facial skin during the first two weeks. Washing, moisturizers, and makeup application should be avoided during this period. If you are having dermabrasion, or a chemical peel, you will need to apply Aquaphor ointment to those areas only. See "After

Dermabrasion, and Chemical Peel” instructions for more information. Men should not shave for two weeks.

After one week, if desired, you may begin to gently wash the face, use moisturizers, and apply makeup to cover residual bruising. Use a gentle, upward motion for the application of makeup and a mild cleanser to remove it. Do not apply makeup to the incisions around the ears for two weeks. If you are going out, you should wear a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. Doing less with your makeup during the first two weeks is always better. If you are not going out, it is best to do nothing.

Skin treatments such as facials, electrolysis and waxing should be avoided for three months. Do not use Retin-A, Renova, or creams containing Vitamin E, glycolic or alpha-hydroxy acids for three months. Using Vitamin E on incisions has not proven to be beneficial. You may use your usual skin care products provided they do not have the ingredients listed above. Gentle, hypoallergenic types are best. Below is a suggested list of products for your use.

Cleansers:

Estee Lauder Verite Light Lotion Cleanser  
Cetaphil soap

Moisturizers:

Crème de la Mer  
Crème de la Mer The Concentrate  
Estee Lauder Verite Moisture Relief Cream  
Clinique Dramatically Different Moisturizer  
Lancome Hydra Zen

Camouflage:

Kiamara Ahnert’s Pro Palette Corrector  
Clinique Continuous Coverage (mix in the palm of your hand and then apply to the face. Do not apply directly to the face because it will come on thick & heavy)  
Dermablend  
Estee Lauder Maximum Cover Camouflage Makeup for Face & Body

Six Months Post Surgery

Clinique Turn Around Cream – (contains Alpha Hydroxy Acids)

Sunscreens

Cetaphil Moisturizer (SPF 15)  
Neutrogena (many types available with SPF 15 or higher)

## **Private Duty Nurses**

It is essential to have a private duty nurse for either twenty-four or forty-eight hours depending on your procedure. This will be discussed with you during your preoperative phone call.

Private duty nurses are available to provide personalized postoperative care and are required if you are having a facelift. The nurses that we use are registered nurses who have been hand selected by Dr. Hidalgo. They are independent contractors and charge a separate fee for their services, (\$75 an hour). The private duty nurse will work a minimum of an eight hour shift.

Private duty nurses are required for at least twenty-four hours for patients having facelift or necklift surgery. Your nurse will monitor your surgical site, remove your drains, administer ice compresses, ensure proper positioning, and assist you with your medications, ointments, and other needs.

Your private duty nurse will meet you at the office when you are ready to leave to escort you to your home or hotel. Plans for transportation should be made prior to surgery (e.g., car service, family car, or taxi). If you choose to take a taxi (most patients find this easiest), we will find one for you. You must stay in Manhattan for at least the first night following your surgery. If you plan to recuperate outside of Manhattan after the first night and you still have a private duty nurse, you must provide car transportation (car service, family car or taxi) to and from the city for the nurse. Traveling time is an additional one hour fee. Please be aware that private duty nurse arrangements need to be made well in advance of your surgical date. We ask that you give 48 hours notice if any changes need to be made in scheduling. You may discuss scheduling with one of our office nurses during your preoperative appointment.