FACELIFT+ LASER RESURFACING INSTRUCTIONS

# PREPARING FOR SURGERY

* Avoid NSAIDs (aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen) for 2 weeks prior to surgery. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is OK for aches and pains.
* Stop taking herbal medications (fish oil, garlic, ginkgo, glucosamine, etc.) and multivitamins 2 weeks prior to surgery as these may thin your blood.
* Refrain from ALL nicotine use including nicotine replacement therapy 1 month before and 2 weeks following surgery. Nicotine and tobacco can significantly delay healing, prevent fat transfers from being successful, and result in possible scarring.
* Refrain from ALL recreational drug use and any THC usage in any form at least 2 weeks prior to surgery and 2 weeks after surgery. Drug use can cause an increased heart rate and pulmonary complications, which can also lead to bleeding in the early post operative period.
* You will need to schedule a pre-operative physical with your primary care provider **3-4 weeks prior** to your procedure.
* Two weeks prior to surgery you will have a pre-operative phone call with our team. During this call, we will review your medical history and answer any questions you may have about the procedure. It is important that you have completed the physical with your primary care provider prior to this call with our team.
* Avoid significant sun exposure 2 weeks before surgery and 4 weeks after.
* Avoid hair coloring, permanents, or other hair treatments for 2 weeks before and 4 weeks after surgery.
* Plan to take 14 days to rest; after that the bruising is coverable with makeup and the swelling is minimized.
* Arrange to have someone, 19 or older, drive you home from surgery and stay with you for at least 24 hours after the procedure. NO Uber/ride share services allowed.
* You will receive an email with individualized day of surgery instructions.
* All body piercings/metal jewelry MUST be removed prior to the day of surgery. Failure to do so will result in an additional fee collected the day of surgery
* If you’re on any GLP-1 receptor agonist (Semaglutide, Ozempic, etc.) weight loss injections or tablets, refrain from injecting or taking those 3-4 weeks prior to surgery, or as otherwise directed by your surgeon.

# SHOPPING LIST

* 1. Vaseline or Aquaphor ointment (new jar)
  2. Q-tips
  3. Oral antihistamine (diphenhydramine/Benadryl or doxylamine)
  4. Stool softener (docusate)
  5. Baby/gentle shampoo
  6. Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
  7. Easy-to-prepare, easy-to-chew meals and snacks
  8. Several gentle washcloths for ice water soaks and to line the compression dressing
  9. Frozen peas for icing
  10. Optional- makeup to cover any bruising
  11. Optional- Arnica Forte® (arnica montana and bromelain) for bruising and swelling
  12. Prescription medications- we will send these to your pharmacy prior to your procedure
  13. Noncomedogenic, hypoallergenic facial moisturizer (ex: Cetaphil, CeraVe)

# POST-OPERATIVE CARE

* You will have a wrap dressing and drain in place overnight. Leave the drain pinned to your shirt (without tension). Our team will remove this the morning after your surgery and place you in a more comfortable support dressing. Wear the support dressing 24 hours per day for the first 7 days. You may take it off to shower.
* You may want to line the support dressing with thin washcloths for comfort and cleanliness. The clothes need to be thin for the support dressing to provide adequate compression.
* Facial cleansing (Elta MD skin care items provided in your post procedure kit):
* For the first 48 hours, cleanse your face with the Elta MD dermal wound cleanser. After you cleanse, apply a layer of the Elta MD Laser Balm. Do this 3 times daily.
* After 48 hours, cleanse your face with the Elta MD Foaming Cleanser and follow with an application of Aquaphor or Vaseline. Do this 3 times daily.
* You may shower after 48 hours. We do not want incision sites to get wet before 48 hours. Wash your hair with baby/ gentle shampoo until your sutures have been removed. You should continue to use gentle shampoo until all your sutures are dissolved.
* You may notice some clear or yellow oozing from areas treated with laser for up to 7 days after the surgery. This is normal and expected.
* It is very important to always keep the treated areas moist. Your skin should never be allowed to dry or form a crust. You should apply either Laser Balm (in the first 48 hours) or Aquaphor (after 48 hours) a minimum of 3 times per day. Some patients require more frequent applications to keep the skin moist.
* Use a Q-tip to apply Vaseline or Aquaphor ointment to your incisions 3 times per day.
* Keep your head elevated for the first 48 hours. A recliner is best while awake. At night, sleep on your back, propped up on 2 pillows. This will minimize swelling and help avoid rolling on the side of your face.
* Icepacks, ice water soaks, and frozen peas may be used over the neck, face, and eyes. Do this as much as possible for the first 48 hours to help with swelling and bruising.
* About 1 week after surgery, you will have your sutures removed. At that time, you will start wearing your support dressing only at night. You may stop wearing the support dressing 2 weeks after your surgery.
* All patients are placed on antibiotics after surgery to prevent an infection. Please start the medication the night of your surgery and complete the ENTIRE course of the medication.
* You may experience some itching as the treated skin heals. Scratching the healing skin (commonly during sleep) may slow recovery. This typically occurs between days 5-7. You may use oral antihistamine tablets to ease the itch (follow product instructions). Note, antihistamines will cause sedation. It should not be used at the same time as sleeping pills or pain pills. If in doubt, ask your pharmacist.
* Between 2 weeks and 2 months after the surgery, it is not uncommon to note the presence of what look like white heads on the treated areas. These are called milia. They are areas where fresh epithelium has overgrown the underlying glands. Soak a clean washcloth in warm water and hold it on the milia for five to 10 minutes. Repeat this process two to three times a day until the milia disappear
* After your skin has healed (~14 days post procedure) you will be instructed by Dr Harbison to:
* Stop using the Aquaphor ointment and begin using a gentle facial moisturizer. You may choose any product, however, it should she be non-comedogenic and hypoallergenic.
* Start applying sunscreen daily. Sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater should be used 365 days per year to help maintain the results of your procedure.
* Do not resume topical medications or other skin care products until instructed by Dr. Harbison at your 4-6 week post-operative visit.
* Avoid vigorous exercise or any significant physical exertion, lifting or straining for a minimum of 2 weeks after your surgery, as this activity could disrupt your healing.
* You may notice that you do not need to take the prescribed pain medication. You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for mild discomfort. Do NOT use ibuprofen (Advil), naproxen (Aleve), or aspirin for pain as they may cause unwanted bleeding. Ensure you do not exceed 4g/day of acetaminophen from all sources. The prescribed oxycodone pain medication does contain acetaminophen.

# RECOVERY PEARLS

* It is common for bruising to be noted on the neck and chest.
* There will be areas of decreased sensation or numbness on the ears and scalp. The sensation will normalize with time. Be very careful to avoid trauma/burns when using curling irons, hot rollers, blow dryers, warm packs, and ice packs.
* You can resume your normal diet but avoid foods that require tall bites (i.e. Big Mac) for 1 week after surgery.
* It is OK to wear contacts the day after surgery unless you also had a blepharoplasty. If you are going to wear glasses, they should not put pressure on your incisions. Please clean your glasses with an antibacterial cleanser before wear.
* A feeling of tightness in the neck is normal and will lessen in the first few weeks but may last up to 6 months.
* Redness after this procedure will last for weeks to months. The redness is coverable with makeup but you may notice you “flush” easily. This will continue to improve over the first post operative year.
* After surgery, it is important to have a bowel movement within a day or two. If you do not, you may take over-the-counter stool softeners to encourage your bowels to move.
* Sunscreen should be applied to the external scars starting 3 weeks after surgery. It is important to protect your scars for *AT LEAST* 1 year to prevent discoloration from the sun. Sunscreen with SPF 30 and above is always recommended to prevent skin cancer and signs of aging/sun damage.
* Resuming activities:
* Light activity (preparing meals, walking around the house): encouraged immediately to prevent blood clots. No lifting greater than 10 pounds, bending over, or straining until cleared by Dr. Harbison.
* Driving: once you are no longer taking pain medications
* Travel: you should wait to travel by air or long distances until cleared by Dr. Harbison. It is best to keep your car rides shorter than 60 minutes to avoid blood clots.
* Hair coloring/permanents: 4 weeks after surgery
* Sports: 6 weeks
* Swimming, sauna, hot tub: 3-4 weeks
* Scuba diving: 12 weeks

# QUESTIONS?

* During normal business hours please call 402-739-8144 and follow the prompts to speak with our clinical team. To ensure a timely response, please call our office with medical questions. Please do not email or text post operative questions.
* If you have a concern after hours, you can follow the prompts to speak to our on-call service. Please note, our call service is unable to answer detailed questions about your care. Please contact our office during normal business hours to speak to one of our plastic surgery team members. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please go to the nearest emergency department.

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