

## GENERAL POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### AFTER ANESTHESIA

1. The medications given during anesthesia may linger in your system for 12-24 hours.
2. It is not uncommon to feel drowsy and dizzy following the procedure. Avoid bending over.
3. Do not drive a car or operate machinery for 12-24 hours.
4. Do not sign any legal documents or make any important legal decisions for 24 hours.
5. It is not usual to experience a sore throat. Cold liquids and ice chips should relieve symptoms. The sore throat should subside in a few days.
6. Diet should begin with clear liquids and advance to your normal diet as tolerated.
7. Occasional nausea and vomiting is a common side effect. If the nausea continues for more than 24 hours, contact the office at (423) 778-8582.
8. Should you have a temperature of 101 degrees or above, notify the office at (423) 778-8582.

### All the circled items will apply to your postoperative period.

1. **Ice:** Ice should be applied to the affected areas for the first 48-72 hours. This will prevent excessive swelling and bruising. Do not place ice bags directly on the skin. Place a light cloth around the ice bag before applying to the affected area.
2. **Elevation:** Sleep elevated on two or three pillows. This will decrease swelling of the tissue. It helps to place a pillow beneath each arm and beneath your knees for comfort. Do not sleep on your side as it will cause more swelling on one side.
3. **Activity:** Go to bed and rest. You may be up to go to the bathroom with assistance. After two days you may be up and about. Minimize activity as you will tire easily and may persist for as long as 3 weeks. Avoid bending and picking up items heavier than 5 lbs. You may exercise lightly after 3 weeks (walking is fine as long as you do not build up a sweat) Strenuous exercise can be performed when instructed by your surgeon. Rest and good nutrition are important healing factors. Avoid alcohol for the first few weeks as it will increase your swelling.
4. **Diet:** Eat soft and easy to chew foods, progressing slowly to your regular diet. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids. Avoid acidic foods if you have had laser around your mouth.
5. **Dressing:** Keep your dressings dry and intact. Some oozing will occur and can be reinforced with gauze and tape. Your dressings and drains will usually be removed the next day. Generally, a light facial support will be worn for the next two weeks.
6. **Medications:** Take your medications as prescribed. You may begin to take your Vitamins and supplements following surgery.

7. **Suture and Staple Removal:** Staples and screws are removed on your 10-day post op visit. Your 10 day follow up appointment is generally given to your appointment on the day following your surgery. If you do not need to be seen the 1<sup>st</sup> day post operatively, call the office to schedule an appointment.
  
8. **Eyelid Surgery:**
  - a. Visual blurring can be caused by the ointment in your eyes. Any decrease in vision associated with swelling, bleeding, increased pain or bruising should be checked by your surgeon.
  - b. Avoid eye strain, Reading and watching TV may begin the next day.
  - c. Swelling and discoloration are greatest on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> day.
  - d. Tearing, itching, burning tightness, puffiness, and bumpy, irregular incision lines are normal during the healing process. Complete healing takes 6-12 months.
  - e. Sutures are generally dissolvable.
  - f. Make up and contact lens can be used 10 days postoperatively. Foundations and mascara should be new to prevent introduction of bacteria.
  - g. Apply Maxitrol ointment to the incision lines for 3 days. **See specific Eyelid Surgery Instructions attached to the consent form.**
  
9. **Nasal Surgery and Packing:**
  - a. Do Not Blow or pick your nose.
  - b. You will be congested due to the dried secretions and will need to breathe through your mouth.
  - c. Packing is removed within two days postoperatively. The splint will be removed on your post-op visit. **See specific Nasal surgery instructions attached to the Rhinoplasty consent.**
  
10. **Shower and Shampoo:** You may shower and shampoo your hair on the third day after surgery. Use a gentle shampoo and massage into your hair. Gently massage your scalp. Rinse with tepid water. Towel and air dry your hair. If you need to use a hair dryer, use the cool setting. Avoid pulling on the incision lines, staples and ears. Avoid Hair color and perm for 3 weeks.
  
10. **Swelling and Bruising:** Swelling, bruising and tightness of the dressing are a normal occurrence after surgery. The most swelling will occur within the first 48 hours. Ice will diminish this as much as possible. The amount of swelling and bruising varies greatly between individuals. A steroid medication may be prescribed to decrease the swelling if Dr. Barker advises. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy may be an option for you, if needed. It accelerates healing time particularly after laser resurfacing.

12. **Numbness, Tingling, Tightness:** Initially you will have numbness, tightness and bumpiness of the skin. Do not be alarmed by the stages of the healing process. The numbness and tightness will give way to bumpiness and a lack of expression. It will be followed by tingling; perhaps some sharp jabs of pain, as the traumatized nerve endings begin to restore feeling. You will then have some itching of the numb areas. All this will subside within the next several months, and your individual features and expressions will return as the tissues relax and heal.
13. **Laser:** Laser patients are advised to keep the areas clean and well lubricated with Aquaphor. This is Vaseline - like ointment that helps moisturize the skin and serve as a barrier to prevent infection. Do not apply any other crèmes as it may inflame and irritate the skin.