

BROW LIFT

AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Facial rejuvenation can entail reversing the effects of aging in one area of the face or the entire neck, cheek, eyelids and brow. The forehead can reveal signs of early aging with persistent lines and wrinkles, and the descent of the brow can give the appearance of tiredness. A brow lift helps to reverse the signs of aging by elevating the outer aspect of the forehead as well as smoothing the central forehead lines. It can be performed behind the hairline (Coronal brow lift), at the hairline (Hairline brow lift), or through small incisions in the scalp (Endoscopic brow lift). Your decision for cosmetic brow lift surgery is an individual one and your brow lift plan will be discussed in your consultations with Dr. Trussler. Each area of the upper face may require different amounts of care depending on what is performed, but in general the after care for any brow lift procedure is very straightforward.

A brow lift is commonly performed in combination with upper eyelid blepharoplasty or other facial cosmetic procedures. Dr. Trussler advises at least one night of observation so that his patients are comfortable and confident in their recovery after this type of surgery.

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

One Week Prior to Surgery:

- Stop all Aspirin, NSAIDs (Motrin™ (Ibuprofen), Alieve™ (Naprosyn), etc.) and Vitamin supplements containing fish oil and Vitamin E, 1 week prior to surgery, as they can all promote bleeding.
- Have requested study results (labs, mammogram, medical clearance, etc.) forwarded to the office.
- Pick up 4 x 4 gauze, triple anti-biotic ointment (Neosporin™ or generic), Refresh™ Plus/PM if eyelid surgery is planned, Hibiclens™ Skin Cleanser, and paper tape at the pharmacy.

Three Days Prior to Surgery:

- Start Hibiclens™ Skin Cleanser (available at pharmacy) as a face wash for all facial cases.
- Start Bromelain 3 days ahead of surgery (2 pills 3 times per day on an empty stomach).
- Arnica is provided and should be started after surgery (3 tabs sublingual 3xday).

THE DAY OF SURGERY

- Wear something loose and comfortable that has a zipper in the front.
- Nothing to eat or drink after midnight.
- If you take routine medications, it is appropriate to skip your morning dose of medications. Please discuss taking thyroid medication, cardiac and/or blood pressure medications prior to surgery.
- Bring your prescribed post-surgical medications with you, for use immediately after surgery, if needed.
- Arrive at the surgery center at least one hour prior to the surgery start time.

POST-OP CARE:

Have someone drive you home and stay with you for 2-3 days.

Medications will be called to your preferred pharmacy prior to surgery.

- Take pain medication and muscle relaxers as prescribed. Do not drink alcohol with these medications. Over the counter stool softeners and/or laxatives should be taken with the pain medication to prevent constipation. Colace, Biscodyl, Milk of Magnesia are all available at your pharmacy and can be taken as directed.

Do not smoke or be around smokers as smoking even second hand smoke delays healing and increase risk of complications.

Get plenty of rest. The general anesthesia, oral steroids and/or pain medication can all promote insomnia; therefore a sleep aid may be taken if needed.

Follow a well balanced diet to include protein and limit the amount salt intake. Protein supplementation can be started one to two weeks before surgery and should include over 30 grams of additional protein. This should be continued for three weeks after surgery. A high salt diet or meal, can lead to increased swelling and prolonged recovery.

Oral hydration should include the use of electrolyte containing fluids such as Gatorade or a low calorie substitute. Limit the amount of caffeinated beverages as they can promote dehydration; however Dr. Trussler recommends you maintain your daily average of caffeine to avoid headaches.

ACTIVITIES:

Keep your head elevated at least 45 degrees above your heart at all times to decrease swelling for 2 weeks.

Cool compresses and ice packs can be applied to the eyes and cheeks for 15 minutes every 4 hours for the first 2 days to help alleviated swelling and bruising.

Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for 3 weeks.

Do not drive for approximately one week, until/or when your vision is normal and you feel comfortable, and you are no longer taking pain medication.

Do not run, lift weights, play tennis or golf for 3-4 weeks after surgery (keep your heart rate under 100 beats over one minute for 3 weeks).

Cardiovascular exercises can be resumed gradually after 3 weeks

Heavy lifting/stretching (Yoga) can be resumed after 6 weeks.

INCISION CARE:

On the first day after the surgery, Dr. Trussler will remove all operative dressings, which may include gauze, non-adherent gauze, ointment, cotton padding and elastic wraps.

No formal dressing will be re-applied; only ointment and light gauze will be applied for the trip home. When the facial and brow lift dressings are removed you can begin washing your face and hair gently with a mild soap and rinse with water. It will not hurt to get water on the stitches or in the eyes. Make sure someone is with you at your first shower, usually our nurse.

You may wash your hair with baby shampoo the day after surgery. It may take several washings before all the crust is out of your hair. Do not use hair sprays, conditioners, gels, etc. while the stitches and clips are in place. Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a cool, not a hot setting

Bacitracin Ointment or Triple Antibiotic Ointment can be applied to the skin incisions for 2 days only to help eliminate crusting and promote suture dissolution.

Incision lines in the hair are usually closed with staples in the scalp. Dr. Trussler feels that these are less traumatic to the hair follicles, and they are easier to remove when the incisions are healed (10 days). There is no need to care for the scalp staple lines because they are in the hair and ointments will be too messy. Gentle hair washing is all that is recommended and care should be taken when combing or brushing the hair.

Cosmetics can be worn on the face as early as 5 days after surgery. However eyelid or eyelash cosmetics should NOT be worn until after the eyelid sutures have been removed and incisions are completely healed (if eyelid surgery was performed).

Hair coloring should be delayed until 3 weeks or more after surgery when healing is completed and no incisional crusting remains.

The skin incision and any areas of bruising can be lightly dressed with a fragrance free moisturizing cream starting one week after surgery. This will promote early softening and maturation of these areas.

Skin care should be kept to a minimum for the first week after surgery. (Skin and scar care will be directed by Dr. Trussler)

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER:

The most common complaint after brow lift surgery is a mild headache.

Tightness of the brow is a normal feeling after this surgery. This may worsen over the first 2 days. This will relax with time and can be relieved with maintaining the head of the bed elevated and with compression. Numbness in the forehead and scalp area for several weeks to months after the surgery can be expected. This is normal and is related to swelling and the disruption of minor sensory nerves in the forehead area. This will improve over time and the feeling will return.

Moderate swelling and bruising of the brow are expected, this will subside in the first 2 weeks.

Bruising and swelling can be seen in the lower eyelids and cheeks after a brow lift because they are in continuity with the upper face and they are the lowest point and area of gravitational collection.

It is common to have discomfort and mild burning at the incisions after brow lift surgery – this is normal, and will improve shortly after surgery.

Discomfort in the areas of surgery may worsen with increased activity and relates to swelling and internal sutures.

You can expect some slight oozing (bloody) from the suture lines and swelling of the incisions. Gauze can be reapplied if it is bothersome. However, you should call the office at (512) 450-1077 if you have a continuous bleeding, significantly more swelling on one side of the face than the other, or any severe pain and associated swelling.

Red discoloration of the incisions may occur if there is significant swelling, especially in the areas of sutures. This will resolve when as the stitches are removed and the incisions heal.

Constipation is common after any operation, and is secondary to the anesthetic, pain medication and dehydration. Please stay well hydrated and pick-up a stool softener and/or laxative with your prescription medications.

Recommendations include:

- Docusate (Colace) 100mg orally twice daily when taking pain medication
- Milk of Magnesia 30cc/1 tbsp. twice daily when taking pain medication
- Prune juice or Sorbitol orally
- Biscodyl or Magnesium Citrate as needed for constipation

WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE:

- If you have increased swelling and bruising of one side of the face significantly more than the other. Remove any covering/dressing to make this determination if it is concerning, as this may represent a hematoma (collection of blood) or a seroma (collection of clear fluid).
- If you have increasing redness or swelling around the incision.
- If you have sever pain not relived by pain medication.
- If you have any side effects from medication: rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have fever over 101.
- If you have yellow or greenish drainage from incision or notice a foul odor.
- If you notice some vaginal burning and itching as a result of the antibiotics used during and after surgery.

For medical questions, please call the office at 512.450.1077. Dr. Trussler should be paged/called on his cell phone for any urgent or emergent medical issues.

FOLLOW-UP CARE:

Your permanent sutures and staples will be removed gradually over a 5 to 10 day period. Generally the stitches close to the ear are dissolvable and will fall out, though if they are persistent after one week they will be removed. No drains are routinely placed during a brow lift, however if a cheek lift is performed as well small drains will be placed during the surgery and then removed by Dr. Trussler the day after the procedure.

It is important to be seen by Dr. Trussler 5 to 10 days after your surgery to remove your sutures. You will then schedule follow up visits at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 6 months, and 1 year postop for check-up.