

KAROL A. GUTOWSKI, MD, FACS

AESTHETIC SURGERY

CERTIFIED BY THE AMERICAN BOARD OF PLASTIC SURGERY

MEMBER AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLASTIC SURGEONS

AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS for FACELIFT & NECKLIFT

MEDICATIONS

- You will be prescribed narcotic pain medication which you should take as needed and directed. While most of these medications are prescribed to be taken 1 to 2 pills every 4 to 6 hours, you may find it better to take 1 pill every 2 to 3 hours if the effects start wearing off too soon. However, do not exceed the prescribed amount per day.
- As your pain decreases, you may switch to over the counter Tylenol (acetaminophen). Keep in mind that you should not take more than 4000 mg of acetaminophen per a day. Your narcotic medication may also contain acetaminophen so you need to be aware of your total dose from all the medications you are using.
- Ibuprofen (ie-Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) may be started the same day as your surgery and may be used together with your narcotic pain medications and with acetaminophen. However, do not use ibuprofen or naproxen if you have had problems with stomach ulcers, kidney problems or if you have been told by a doctor not to use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
- You may also be prescribed a muscle relaxant (ie- Valium, Xanax), which you may use for any break thru pain. Take as instructed by physician.
- Purchase an over the counter stool softener (Metamucil, Colace) while taking narcotic pain medication. This helps avoid constipation.

DIET

- You should resume your normal diet gradually.

ACTIVITY

- If you were given a face and neck compression band, do not remove it unless instructed to do so.
- **IMPORTANT: To decrease the risk of blood clots after surgery, do not spend time in bed except for when you normally sleep. Except during your normal sleeping time, get up and walk around for at least 5 minutes every hour.**
- **SHOWER:** You may shower 1 day after surgery. DO NOT take a tub bath, swim, or whirlpool for 3 weeks or if there are any openings in the incision.
- **SLEEPING:** For the 3 days, sleep with your head & shoulders slightly elevated to help reduce swelling. Use at least 2 pillows for support.
- **Avoid bending over for the first week after surgery**
- Do **NOT** push, pull, or lift anything heavier than 20 pounds (about the weight of a 2 gallons of milk) for 1 week.
- Do **NOT** do any strenuous activity or exercise (running, weight lifting, aerobics) for 3 weeks. After you start exercising, go slowly over 1 to 2 weeks until you are comfortable with the exercises.
- Do **NOT** engage in any sexual activity for at least 2 weeks; resume when completely comfortable.

- Do **NOT** drive or handle heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medication or muscle relaxant medications.
- Cosmetics may be applied 1 week after surgery.

INCISION & SCAR MANAGEMENT

- Apply a thin layer of Vaseline ointment or antibiotic ointment to the incisions with a Q-tip 3 times a day for 3 days only. If you have tape on your incision, do **NOT** apply anything.
- See Incision and Scar Care instructions for scar prevention. Silicone gel ointment is recommended for face incisions after the sutures are removed.
-

WHAT ELSE TO EXPECT

- You can expect some minor bleeding from the incisions and some swelling. If the swelling on one side is **definitely** more pronounced than on the other side, if you have a continuous bloody drip or if you are experiencing pain which is not relieved by pain medication, call Dr. Gutowski immediately.
- Some discomfort for 3 to 4 weeks, although it should gradually get better from the first 2 to 3 days.
- If there are any sutures, they will be removed in 5 to 7 days after your surgery.
- Surgical incisions are usually thin at first, become somewhat thick and red for up to 6 months, and then begin to fade. It usually takes up to or a little more than 1 year before final scar quality is established

WHEN TO CALL DR. GUTOWSKI

- Fever over 101.5 for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Marked increase in redness, swelling, or pain around incision or drains.
- Any excessive bleeding or drainage from your incisions.
- Pain is not relieved by prescription medication.
- Persistent problems with nausea or vomiting
- **CHEST PAIN or TROUBLE BREATHING: CALL 911 or go to an Emergency Room**