



BOSTON CENTER

— FOR PLASTIC SURGERY —
AESTHETICS FOR THE FACE & BODY

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Direct Neck Lift Post-Operative Care

What Can I Expect?

- Swelling, bruising, numbness, and tightness of your neck are normal complaints, this will generally last 1-2 weeks
- You will have decreased sensation in and around your surgical incision. This is normal and will return as your body heals. Please be very mindful of shaving and icing during this time.

At Home (in the days immediately following the procedure):

- Sleep with your head elevated on 2-3 pillows or sleep in a recliner for the first week. Do not sleep on your side or back.
- It is normal to be drowsy from the anesthetics. For safety reasons, please use assistance when getting out of bed to go to the bathroom
- Try to eat a light, soft meal in the evening following your procedure. This will help prevent possible nausea that you may experience from your pain medications or antibiotics.
- Take your antibiotics as prescribed with food to reduce nausea. For discomfort, take Tylenol every 4-6 hours.
- Apply ice packs (Frozen peas or corn also works very well) over the strap, to your face and neck for 15 minutes every hour while you are awake, for the first full day after your dressing is removed.

At your first visit - Day 1 After Surgery

- The tighter dressing will be changed to a looser, protective dressing. You will be given a special type of gauze to **wear 24 hours a day for the first 4 days postoperatively**. You should remove this to shower and clean your incisions

Cleansing:

- After this visit, you should clean your incision sites once daily for the first week after surgery. You will clean **the top and bottom incisions** with a 50/50 mixture of hydrogen peroxide and water. Gently brush the wounds with a cotton swab dipped in the mixture until any crusting (scab) is removed from the wounds
- You will use warm compresses, (gauze soaked in warm water) once a day on the **middle incision** only.
- After cleaning all incisions, apply a thin layer of Aquaphor over them



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After the first post-op visit:

- You may wash your face gently with a mild soap (ie. Cetaphil) and warm water. Avoid vigorous scrubbing.
- You may shower and shampoo your hair. A mild shampoo (such as Johnson & Johnson) works best. Avoid scrubbing. It is okay for soap and water to run over incision lines.

Day 3-5 after surgery:

- If you have any drains, these will be removed in the office, usually 3-5 days after surgery. Depending on drain output, they can be removed latest 7 days post-op
- *Eat something light and take your pain medicine as directed before coming to the office for the dressing change and visits for suture removal (below).

Day 7 after your surgery:

- On day 7 after surgery, the sutures will be **removed** in the office.
- After the suture removal, you no longer need to clean your incisions unless crusts build-up
- You will continue to use Aquaphor on the incision lines at least once a day for the next week to keep them hydrated
- If there are residual scabs, they will fall off in time, do not pick at them.
- You will continue to use warm compresses on the middle incision for one more week.
- For one more week, you will continue to use the dressing only around your neck at night when you sleep

General follow-up care:

- You will be swollen and bruised for 1-2 weeks after the procedure. Swelling will also return as swelling will go down as the incisions heal.
- * Avoid sudden movements of your head to either side to prevent tension on the sutures. Move your shoulder along with your head. It is important to prevent excessive tension on the incision for 3 weeks after surgery.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. *When can I take aspirin or Advil?*
 - You should not take aspirin, Advil (ibuprofen), Aleve (naproxen), or any other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for 2 weeks prior to surgery or 2 weeks afterward. The same is true for vitamin E, ginkgo, garlic pills, and other “natural” supplements.



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2. *What about exercise?*

Please adhere to the following schedule:

- Week 1: **REST!** No strenuous exercise. Walking is encouraged.
- Week 2: You may begin light aerobic exercise (treadmill, bike, elliptical) but no bending over/straining/lifting weights.
- Week 3: You may begin more strenuous exercise, such as yoga, stretching, bending over, and lifting weights. Please remember to start slowly and listen to your body
- Week 6+: You may resume contact sports, such as soccer, basketball, etc
*No swimming (submerging head under water) until skin is healed, a minimum of 6 weeks, recommended longer

Additional Instructions:

- Finish the course of antibiotics as prescribed.
- Do not hyper-extend your neck or place your chin towards your chest for any prolonged period of time for 4 weeks.
- No earrings for 3 weeks.
- We recommend bringing a scarf so you can feel more comfortable with a cover-up when you leave.

For Men

- No shaving of your face for 3 full days after surgery.
- Please use an electric razor as it is safer and more comfortable. As healing progresses, we will instruct as to when a blade razor may be used.
- Shaving may feel strange as your skin will be numb for weeks after surgery.