

SIEGEL

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

After Deep Plane Facelift and Neck Lift

- What can I expect after surgery?
- Call the Office promptly if you notice any of the following
- How do I care for myself after surgery?
- Recovery timetable

What can I expect after surgery?

While Traditional Facelift surgery often comes with significant swelling, bruising, and a longer recovery time, many patients find that their experience is much smoother after a deep plane facelift with Dr. Siegel. This type of facelift entails less skin undermining and trauma to the skin compared to standard procedures, leading to notably reduced swelling and bruising. In fact, most patients feel ready to step out in public around days 10 to 14 after their surgery with Dr. Siegel. Here's a handy guideline to help you know what to expect after your surgery.

Fortunately, most of our patients report minimal pain. You might feel mild discomfort from the head dressing after surgery, but this should be easily managed with oral medications. Typically, Tylenol with codeine, or a suitable alternative if there's an allergy to codeine, is more than enough for pain relief.

The day following your surgery, we'll remove the bulky dressing and, if present, the drain in our office, which should provide immediate relief. After that, you'll wear a supportive elastic garment continuously for the first 7 to 10 days, except when showering. After the first week, you can switch to wearing it only at night for the next 2-3 weeks.

Some bruising and swelling are to be expected after the surgery. These symptoms will peak within the first 36-to-48 hours after surgery and will gradually subside over the next 10-to-14 days. To minimize the swelling, you should sleep with your head elevated with at least three pillows for a couple of weeks after the surgery.

It is not unusual to have some slight drainage for the first 48 hours after surgery.

Any significant sudden increase in facial swelling, pain, and or pressure should prompt you to call the office, if after hours call Dr. Siegel directly on his cellphone at 832-265-1935.

Call the office promptly if you notice any of the following:

- Development of a temperature elevation exceeding 101.0 degrees.
- Unusual or new bleeding or discharge from the incision.
- A new significant progressive increase in facial swelling and pain, which is not easily relieved by taking your prescribed medication.
- repeated or violent vomiting.

If any of the above should occur after regular office hours, do not hesitate to reach Dr. Siegel directly on his cell phone at 832-265-1935. For whatever reason, if you notice one of the above changes and cannot reach us at our office or after hours, present yourself to the emergency department for evaluation.

How do I care for myself after surgery?

Make arrangements to have someone drive you to, and from, your surgery.

Having someone stay with you on at least the first night after your surgery is highly recommended.

Be sure to fill your prescriptions before your surgery.

Arrive for your surgery in loose, comfortable clothing. Your top should button or zip rather than pull over your head.

Take the antibiotics and pain medication only as prescribed by the office.

Do not take any aspirin or any anti-inflammatory compounds for 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after your surgery. Natural supplements should also be discontinued within the same time frame. Ensure Dr. Siegel is aware of any your prescription medications at least 2 weeks before surgery.

Avoid any smoking or nicotine products, including patches, at least 2 weeks before surgery and 3 weeks after surgery. Tobacco inhibits your circulation and can significantly compromise your surgical outcome.

You should thoroughly wash your hair with an antibacterial shampoo (such as Hibiclens®) or soap (available in drug stores) the night before surgery.

To minimize swelling, you may use cool, clean compresses or frozen corn in Ziploc bags in a dry cloth. Apply these gently to your face four to six times a day for the first twenty-four hours after surgery.

Sleep with the head elevated and at least three pillows for 2 weeks after surgery.

External sutures should be kept moist with Aquaphor or Vaseline three times a day before they are removed. Sutures in front of the ear will be removed 5-7 days after surgery. The ones behind your ears on days 10-14.

You should not do vigorous exercise and should avoid any significant physical exertion, lifting or straining for a minimum of 3 weeks after your surgery, as this activity could disrupt your wound healing. Plan on taking it easy.

You may shower or bathe on the second day after surgery. Use only tepid water, and do not scrub around your incisions. When brushing or combing your hair, use care around the incisions for the first 3 weeks. Often, having a friend or family member brush your hair is helpful. Do not rub, wash, or massage your face until after you are examined and told it is all right to do so. Likewise, do not wear make-up until your surgeon says that it is all right to do so.

You can expect to experience some numbness around your ear lobes, face and neck for several weeks after surgery. Tightness during mouth opening is not uncommon. Likewise, a feeling of tightness in your neck is also not unusual after surgery. This sensation is most pronounced in the first 1-to-2 days after surgery, while the bulky dressing is in place. This dressing may give rise to a slight sense of labored breathing or a mild difficulty with swallowing. While healing, turn your head from the shoulders rather than twisting your neck.

It is not unusual during the healing phase, to note some irregularities under the skin. These small distortions will gradually subside and eventually resolve. Small bumps under the skin are present where sutures were placed to resuspend the muscles of the face and neck. The skin often feels stiff while it is healing. Although most of these things resolve over several weeks.

Swelling is uneven and variable, your face will appear asymmetric and will change from day to day. This is normal and part of the healing process. Be patient, as the swelling subsides your normal facial symmetry will return.

Recovery timetable

Approximate recovery after facelift is as follows:

DAY 0 Return home. Use cool compresses or ice for 24 hours. Sleep elevated.

DAY 1 Return to the office for dressing removal.

DAY 2-3 You may shower. Maximum bruising and swelling.

DAY 5-10 Stitches removed or dissolving. The bruising is starting to go away.

WEEK 1 Wear an elastic garment at all times except when showering.

WEEKS 2-3 Wear elastic garments at night only. Swelling much improved. Some areas of the face and neck will feel quite stiff. Residual bruising can be covered by make-up.

REMEMBER: If you have any concerns or questions, please contact our office at any time. Our office should be a source of information and reassurance throughout this entire experience, from the time of your first consultation and continuing after your surgery. After hours you can reach Dr. Siegel directly on his cell phone at 832-265-1935.