

Rhytidectomy (Facelift) Information Sheet

A facelift can help to reverse the signs of aging associated with stress, sun exposure, and gravity. This operation lifts the skin and deeper muscles of the face to smooth wrinkles, lift the cheeks, and minimize nasolabial folds (lines running from sides of nose down to mouth) and/or jowl formation. A facelift can leave you looking rested and more youthful without changing your individual facial qualities. This procedure can make you look 10 – 15 years younger and the result may last for many years. Facelifts are often done in combination with blepharoplasties (eye lift) and a brow or forehead lift.

Incisions for a facelift typically run in front of the ear, behind the ear, and into the hairline. A small incision under the chin may also be necessary to correct platysmal (neck) banding and/or to perform liposuction. These incisions are sutured closed and the sutures are removed 5 – 10 days after surgery.

PRE-OPERATIVE

Prior to booking surgery, you will need to decide who your support person will be. It is important that they are aware of the type of surgery you are having, that they are not “squeamish”, and that they are available solely to you during your immediate recovery period (they should not have any other commitments). At the minimum, you cannot be left alone for the first 24 hours after surgery, and you should have someone available to help you for about 3-5 days with regular daily activities, such as making meals, running errands, walking the dog, etc. You will likely need assistance with your first hair wash and managing incision care. We advise against driving until after you are seen in office postoperatively, as you cannot drive while taking pain medication. In addition, you may find your vision is affected if you have also had eyelid surgery, or are experiencing post-operative swelling.

After you have paid a deposit and a surgical date has been confirmed, you will receive more specific information and a review of what you are required to complete before surgery. Once you have booked your date, please ensure you have the following supplies on hand:

- Q-tips
- Stool softener (i.e. Colace or Senokot), as pain medication may cause constipation
- Tylenol Extra Strength
- Ibuprofen 400 mg

If you have not already done so, your surgeon will request that you meet with our Clinical Nurse Specialist, Shelley Clarke. She will perform a facial analysis using our Visia camera system, which helps us see below the surface of the skin. She will discuss any concerns you have with your skin's appearance and provide her recommendations. Products will be provided; and depending on the timeline, you may also be offered other treatment options (such as laser) to help prepare your skin for surgery, or to complement the procedure. If you are seeing someone else for skincare management, please let us know.

You will be asked to stay at the Parkside Hotel (our building), for a minimum of one night (day of surgery). This enables us to monitor and help care for you after surgery. We recommend checking in the day before, if at all possible, to minimize stress on your surgical day. If this is not possible, you may request an early check-in, though this cannot be guaranteed. If checking in the day of surgery, your support person's name must then be on the reservation, as they will have to check in on your behalf. To book your stay at Parkside, please call: 1-855-616-3557, or visit our website. Please mention you are booking under the “clinic 805” rate, and they will give you a discount on your room.

DAY OF SURGERY

***Please bring a head scarf or hat and a pair of sunglasses for when you leave the hotel.
Men should present clean-shaven on the day of surgery.***

Surgery can take 3–6 hours to complete and is typically performed under a monitored anesthetic. You will then spend 1–3 hours in our recovery room resting with your head elevated and ice packs to help minimize post-operative swelling and bruising. You must be discharged from the clinic with a responsible adult (preferably the person who will be helping care for you after surgery). When you leave the clinic, you will have a dressing around your head. Discomfort after the procedure is usually minimal and well controlled with medication. Arrival time for surgery will not be provided to you until about 1-2 weeks prior, so it is important that both you and your support person do not have any other responsibilities that day.

POST-OPERATIVE & LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP

One of our nurses will visit you in the hotel room to monitor your progress and to teach you and your caregiver how to manage once you return home. You will then be seen by a nurse in our office 5–14 days after surgery, usually two times as needed for suture removal and assessment of swelling and bruising. Although camouflage makeup can help to conceal bruising, most patients are away from work for 2–3 weeks after their surgery. If you want to keep your surgical decision private, it is best to not to plan any social engagements or return to work for at least 21 days after your procedure.

Men may shave a couple days after surgery, keeping a wide berth from your incisions. If you prefer, you may wait until after your sutures are removed.

You must refrain from strenuous physical activity, heavy lifting, and any activities where your head is below your heart, for about 4–6 weeks after surgery. Most patients begin reincorporating their regular physical activities around four weeks and slowly work up to their preoperative activity level (typically around six weeks or so).

Though rare, post-operative complications from any procedure are possible. These can include bleeding (hematoma), infection, asymmetry, unsatisfactory scarring, and facial nerve paresis. Altered sensations (numbness, tingling, and/or hypersensitivity) are to be expected while you are healing, and can persist for several weeks or months. Our health care team follows you closely to recognize and treat any complications, should they arise.

As with any surgery, results cannot be guaranteed. The goal of cosmetic plastic surgery is improvement, and perfection is not attainable. Final results depend on many factors and healing can vary from patient to patient. It is important to remember to have patience during convalescence to allow your body time to recuperate and settle.

Six weeks after surgery, you will again meet with our nurse, Shelley. She will help you manage your skincare and discuss future options for maintaining your surgical results. This may include laser treatment, injections of Botox and/or dermal filler, and/or skincare products. A protocol will be customized for your personal needs and goals.

Dr. Robinson will see approximately 6 weeks post-op and again at approximately 4–6 months after your surgery to assess your result and take photographs. If revisions are required, they would be discussed, and a surgical plan set up at this time.