Ira L. Savetsky, MD
Plastic Surgery Recovery Guide
Facelift



We are honored you have chosen Dr. Savetsky for your surgery. Our Goal is to provide you with a safe experience and beautiful, natural results. Please follow the instructions in this guide to help ensure a smooth recovery.

Included in this Recovery Guide

This recovery Guide is broken up into sections to take you through all the information you will need for your procedure. Please read through all the information carefully and remember to call or email our office with any questions or concerns.

- **Prescriptions you will receive before surgery**
- **Supplies you will need**
- **Pre-Operative Instructions (Before Surgery)**
- **Your First 24 Hours After Surgery**
- **Post-Operative Cleaning Instructions**
- **Your First Post-Op Appointment**
- **Face/Neck Lift Aftercare Instructions**
- **Face/Neck Lift Self Care Instructions**
- **Please Contact Our Office if You Experience**
- **What to Expect in Your Healing Process**
- **Recovery Do’s and Don’ts**
- **Office Contact Information**



Remember: everyone heals differently and at different speeds! Be patient with your body throughout the healing process and follow the recovery instructions. We are here for you every step of the way!

Prescriptions You Will Receive Before Surgery



- **Cefadroxil (Duricef) 500 mg:** this is an antibiotic; you will take this twice a day for 7 days.
- **Ondansetron (Zofran) 4 mg:** this is an anti-nausea medication; you can take 1 tablet every 4-6 hours as needed.
- **Diazepam** (**Valium) 5 mg:** this is an anti-anxiety medication; you can take 1 tablet every 6 hours as needed.
- **Mupirocin (Bactroban) Ointment:** this is a topical antibiotic ointment; you will apply this to the suture line using a cotton swab (Q-tip) twice daily.
- **Hydrocodone/ Acetaminophen (Norco) 5/325 mg:** this is a pain medication; you can take 1 tablet every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
- **Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 500mg:** over-the-counter pain medication may be used in lieu of prescribed pain medication for mild pain.
- **Methylprednisolone (Medrol Dosepak):** take the tablets each day as directed on the blister pack, Following the numbered instructions and taking the correct number of tablets at the designated times.
- **Arnica Montana:** 30c 5 pellets 3 times per day starting one week before surgery and for two weeks after surgery. * Optional this is homeopathic and may help with bruising and swelling.
- **Bromelain 500 mg:** one capsule 3 times per day starting one week before surgery and for two weeks after surgery. * Optional this is homeopathic and may help with bruising and swelling.
- **Naloxone** (**Narcan):** emergency rescue medication and is ordered by New York state law when taking prescribed pain medication.

Supplies You Will Need

These Items Will be Supplied to you before your surgery by our office:

- Xeroform
- Telfa Pads
- Cotton Swabs (Q-tips)
- Hydrogren Peroxide
- Gauze
- Head wrap

Please have the following items available to you before surgery:

- Extra pillows or a wedge

Pre-Operative Instructions (Before Surgery)

To help ensure a smooth procedure, please follow these pre-operative instructions

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery.
- Shower prior to arrival, but do not apply any products to your face or body afterward.
- Do not wear jewelry or contact lenses.
- Wear comfortable clothing that buttons or zips in the front.
- Bring all medications from your pharmacy, as well as any garments or supplies previously provided by our office.
- Please also obtain Tylenol Extra Strength (which may be used instead of prescribed narcotic pain medication), Colace, and Bromelain from your pharmacy.
- Please bring a head scarf and sunglasses with you the day of surgery.

Pre-Operative Instructions (Before Surgery): Continued

Please adhere to these Medication and lifestyle guidelines before your procedure.

- Avoid hormonal medications according to the schedule provided by your doctor.
- Discontinue weight loss injections at least 2 weeks prior to surgery.
- Avoid NSAIDs, aspirin-containing products, and supplements for 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after surgery.
- Avoid alcohol for 1 week before and 1 week after surgery.

***Please notify us if you feel unwell at any time prior to your procedure.**

First 24 Hours After Surgery

After you have finished the initial recovery from your procedure in the surgery center, you will be accompanied by a nurse to your hotel room. You will be wrapped up in dressings as well as a surgical head wrap, and you will have surgical drains in place around the neck area. The nurse will be provided with instructions on how to care for these drains. It is important to walk around to encourage blood flow in order to prevent blood clots; your nurse will be there to assist you with this. Make sure to apply covered ice packs or a Swiss eye mask to the exposed areas of your face in order to assist with post-operative swelling. Dr. Savetsky will come and visit you at the hotel during the first 24 hours after surgery in order to assess you and remove the surgical drains. It is important to keep your head elevated above your heart to reduce swelling. Apply Mupirocin ointment to the suture line twice daily until suture removal.

Your First Post-Op Appointment 

- You will return to the office approximately **7 days after surgery.** During this visit, some of your sutures will be removed.
- We will coordinate with you on the date of your next post-op appointment to remove the rest of your sutures.
- It is important to continue to follow the wound care instructions and to keep wearing head wrap 24 hours for the next two weeks following your procedure. We know wearing the garment is not fun, but it is **VERY IMPORTAN**T, and it will aid in your healing process.

Post-Operative Cleaning Instructions 

- Apply Mupirocin ointment liberally to the suture line twice daily until they are removed.
- Once the sutures are removed, you may continue to apply Mupirocin ointment twice a day to the area where they were removed from for the next two weeks.
- You may begin to use the Scar Cream on the incisions twice daily when instructed by Dr. Savetsky. This is usually begun at the two to three week post op mark.
- Massage the Scar Cream to the incision area, rubbing it in a circular motion.
- Scar Cream can be used daily for 6 months in order to minimize scar problems.

Face/Neck Lift Aftercare Instructions

For the best possible healing and surgical outcome, please follow these instructions during your recovery.

- **After surgery, elevate your head and shoulders on a 45-degree angle wedge rest.** For the first two weeks after surgery. Do not bend forward at the neck.
- **Avoid straining** of any kind for the first 5 days.
- When awake in bed, please **flex your ankles and legs up and down 4-6 times every hour** to promote circulation.
- **Apply cold compresses, covered ice bags, or Swiss Eye Masks to the exposed areas of your face for the first 72 hours after surgery** to reduce postoperative swelling.
- **If you have pain or discomfort, take pain medication every 4-6 hours as prescribed.** It is best to take pain medication with simple foods such as crackers, jello, etc. Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication. If you do not have pain, please do not take the pain medication.
- **A light diet is best following surgery that day**. Begin by taking liquids slowly and then progress to soups or jello. You may start with a soft, regular, high protein diet the next day.
- You may have drains placed under the skin after surgery, in the neck area. These will be secured in place, and you will/can sleep with them. Please avoid pulling on the drains. **The bulbs connected to the end of the drains should be kept compressed at all times.** Instructions regarding the drains will be given to your nurse. The drains are usually removed within two days of surgery.
- You can expect some swelling of the face and eyes after surgery. **If you develop acute onset swelling on one side of your face or neck, which is significantly more pronounced on one side**, please call Dr. Savetsky on his cell phone 516-319-1243.
- If you are having pain that is **unrelieved by the prescribed pain medication,** please call Dr. Savetsky on his cell phone 516-319-1243.

Face/Neck Lift Aftercare Instructions: Continued

- **Avoid turning your head to either side,** as this will pull on the stitch lines. To turn, move your head and shoulders together as a unit.
- **Do not smoke or use any nicotine products**. This is very important as it affects proper healing.
- Facial movements such as talking, smiling, chewing, yawning, etc, **should be kept to a minimum for the first week.**
- **Normal activity can be gradually resumed 4 weeks after surgery. Avoid lifting objects greater than 10 pounds for up to 6 weeks** after surgery. Before the activity restrictions are lifted, **walking is encouraged to stimulate circulation and reduce swelling.**
- The skin of your face is sensitive to light after surgery. Protect your facial skin from excessive exposure to the sun for at least **8 weeks** after surgery. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen with **at least SPF 30**.

Face/Neck Lift Self Care Instructions

- You may resume wearing makeup **2 weeks** after your surgery.
- **After your dressings and drains have been removed**, typically this is at the two-day postoperative mark. You may wash your hair with baby shampoo. Lather your hair gently using the palms of your hands and rinse thoroughly until the soap is out. It may take several washings before all of the crust and ointment from the procedure is out of your hair. Do not use hairspray, conditioner, gels, etc, while the stitches are in place.
- **You may start washing your face gently** and use a moisturizer on your face after the drains are removed. Be careful to keep products away from the suture lines.
- Your hair may be dried with a blow dryer on a **cool setting**, not hot.
- Coloring your hair should be delayed for **at least 1 month** after surgery, once stitches are removed and healing is further progressed.
- Do not wear pullover clothing or hairpieces for at least 3 weeks after surgery, as you could disrupt your incisions.

Please Contact Our Office if You Experience ⚠

- Fever greater than 100.4°F (38.6 °C)
- Heavy or persistent bleeding that does not improve with gentle pressure.
- Increasing redness, warmth, swelling, or foul-smelling drainage from the incision sites.
- Severe pain that is not relieved by your prescribed pain medication.
- Any concerns about your healing or recovery.

What to Expect in Your Healing Process

Swelling: Most swelling improves within 2-4 weeks post-op; however, subtle swelling can linger up to a year. Do not worry! This is expected and all a part of the healing process.
Bruising: Bruising can last for around 7-14 days after surgery and will fade.

Recovery Do's and Don'ts



Do: Sleep on your back with your head elevated at a 45 degree angle with a wedge. This helps reduce swelling.
Do: Walk frequently after surgery; walking is great for reducing swelling.
Do: Be mindful of your healing and be careful when moving your head around in order not to put stress on your stitches.

Don't: Wash your face, wear makeup, or use face products until 2 weeks post op.
Don't: Smoke or use any nicotine products because this affects healing.
Don't: Lift anything over 10 lbs or participate in vigorous exercise until cleared by Dr. Savetsky.