

NECK SURGERY

Surgery Date: _____ Place: _____ Arrival Time: _____

TWO WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Some medication can interfere with anesthesia and cause undesirable side effects that affect your surgery. Please read over the enclosed medication information list and let us know if you take any of them. Aspirin should not be taken 2 weeks before surgery. Tylenol is a good medication to take for any aches or pains you may have prior to surgery.
2. Smoking will affect how you heal. It is very important to stop smoking 2-3 months before your surgery.
3. If you develop a cold, facial sore or any other illness prior to surgery, please notify us.
4. If you are having surgery as an outpatient, please be sure arrangements have been made for a responsible adult to drive you to and pick you up after surgery and to stay with you for the first 24 hours.

EVENING BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Shampoo your hair and wash your face with mild soap and water for 3 full minutes. Do not use conditioner or hair spray after shampooing.
2. In preparation for after surgery, place two pillows for elevation of your head & shoulders on your bed.
3. Make some jello and/or soup for after surgery.
4. Get a good night's rest.
5. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight.

MORNING OF SURGERY: Be at the Surgery Center/Hospital at: _____

1. Do not eat or drink anything if your surgery is scheduled before noon. If your surgery is scheduled after noon, you may have coffee or tea and dry toast at least 6 hours before your surgery time.
2. Do not wear wigs, hairpins, hairpieces, jewelry, contact lenses, dentures, nail polish, or makeup. Dress in loose-fitting comfortable clothes. Do not wear pullover tops or panty hose. Wear slip on shoes.

3. Have someone drive you to your surgery and make certain someone will be available to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours. Put a pillow and blanket in the car for the trip home. Ladies should bring sunglasses and a scarf.

AT HOME AFTER SURGERY:

1. After surgery, it is best for you to go to bed and keep your head elevated on 2 pillows.
2. Most patients will require a compression dressing on the scalp for the first 12-24 hours after surgery to reduce the amount of swelling.
3. If you have pain or discomfort, take the pain medication every 3-4 hours. It is best to take pain medication with crackers, jello, etc. If you have no pain, do not take the medication. Alcohol and pain medications should not be taken together.
4. A light diet is best for the day of surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or jello. You can start a regular diet the next day.
5. You can expect some bleeding from the staple lines and swelling of the scalp. However, you should call the office if you have a continuous bloody drip, significantly swelling, or any severe pain.

OTHER POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. On the day after surgery, your dressing will usually be off or need to be removed. You may have a drain in place as well that will usually be removed within 2 days
2. On the evening after surgery or the second day you may take a shower and gently clean the scalp. Neck wounds should be cleaned with a gentle soap or baby shampoo.
3. Diluted Hydrogen peroxide often helps to remove old blood and debris but should be discontinued after several days.
4. Try to clean the scalp wound slowly over time; not all at once. Avoid applying ointments to the scalp or hair bearing areas because it will tend to cause matting of the hair in the wound. It is best to simply allow the wound to dry once cleaned in these areas. Wounds away from hair should be treated with Vaseline for 2-3 days.

5. If your eyes burn or feel dry use Natural Tears eye-drops as needed. Notify your physician if the problem persists.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Neck tissue is vascular and prone to bleeding. Patient should be calm and sedentary for several days after neck surgery. Sometimes support garments are recommended. The wound may be longer than you expect to allow for proper closure.
2. Sometimes skin grafting of the neck is required to close large wounds. If a skin graft is applied to the scalp local wound care is required on the graft and donor. Please talk to Dr. Lowe if you have a skin graft.
3. Tearing often occurs after surgery due to local swelling or surgery. This will usually stop as the swelling goes away.
4. Tightness and irregularity of the wound is normal after the surgery. This will relax with time but may take several months. Extreme swelling with pain may represent bleeding under the skin and Dr. Lowe should be contacted immediately.
5. Red discoloration of the wound may occur if there is a lot of swelling. This is painless, and will usually disappear completely over time. If the redness is associated with heat, drainage, or fever you should notify your physician.
6. Staples may be used to close defects of the scalp or neck. Staples allow for less shaving of the head and prevent injury to the hair follicles. Staples and some sutures are usually not removed from the scalp for 2 weeks.
7. Strenuous activity/heavy lifting of objects greater than 10 lbs should be avoided for up to 6-8 weeks.
8. All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact is to be avoided and coverage is indicated for at least 6 months.
9. Please take all medication carefully and as directed. If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call the office.
10. If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101), redness or increased pain at the surgical incisions, please call us immediately.

JBL/awh