



James A. Rieger, MD
316-652-9333

Post Operative Information for Facelift

The following information is intended for your well-being and will assist you during your recovery period. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call us at 316-652-9333 (there is an answering service 24 hour/day). For after hours, post-surgical concerns, if you have left a message and have not received a call back within 30 minutes you may call Kansas Medical Center at 316-300-4000 and have them contact me. If you are experiencing a medical emergency and need immediate medical attention go to the nearest emergency room or if necessary dial 911.

Some reasons to call:

- Bleeding (small amounts of oozing may be expected)
- Fever
- Pain not relieved by medication
- Severe pain
- Severe or asymmetric swelling
- Redness, warmth, drainage or odor from the operative site
- Persistent nausea, vomiting, inability to urinate or constipation
- If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding your condition or surgery

A Note About Questions

Your healing journey is unique, and no two recoveries are exactly alike. If something worries you, please reach out to our office directly. We know your medical history and surgery details, and can give you advice that's safe and specific to you. Online forums and social media may offer general information, but they can also be confusing or misleading. We're here for you—day or night—so please call us anytime you have questions or concerns. **316-652-9333**

Following surgery you will go to the post-anesthesia care unit to recover prior to leaving the facility. Two small, clear plastic drains will be present. We will see you the day after surgery in our office to determine if the drainage has subsided enough for them to be removed.

Being lightheaded or having weakness after surgery is possible. It is recommended to have someone assist you to and from your car, with your seat belt, dressing/undressing, in the bathroom and getting in and out of bed. **It is advisable that you have a responsible person stay with you for the first 24 hours following surgery.**

Avoid the risk of extreme swelling & post operative problems by avoiding the six "S's"

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Straining | 4) Sunshine |
| 2) Stooping | 5) Smoking |
| 3) Sexual activity | 6) Strenuous activities |

Swelling, bruising, tightness, and mild drainage from incision sites are normal during the first week. You can expect to feel sleepy for a day or two after surgery. Normally, this area regains sensation but it does require time (approximately six months). During the first few weeks use a pillow or a recliner to keep your head elevated when sleeping or resting to help prevent further swelling or bruising.



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Follow-up: We will see you the day after surgery as well as one week following your surgery. This appointment is typically made at your pre-op appointment. However, if this was not done please call our office (316-652-9333) to do so.

"DO"

- Have your prescriptions filled right away.
- Completely finish your antibiotics and use your pain medication as needed, following directions.
- Gradually progress to a normal diet, beginning with liquids and light foods (i.e. jello, crackers, soups).
- Resume taking any prior daily prescriptions, UNLESS they are on the list of medications to avoid.
- You may shower two days after surgery. Gently wash/shampoo the hair.
- Start walking slowly around your home as soon as you feel able. Moving around helps lower your risk of blood clots in your legs. Take it easy—don't push yourself too hard. Most patients are back to their normal activity level in about 6 weeks.
- Most patients can return to work in about a week, depending on their job. Be sure to talk with Dr. Rieger about what's right for you.

"DO NOT"

- Do not make any important decisions or sign any important papers in the 24 hours following surgery or while taking pain medication.
- Do not swim in a pool for 4-5 weeks.
- Do not use hot tubs or swim in lakes or oceans for eight weeks.
- Do not drive, operate machinery or tools until it is specifically allowed (usually 3 days) OR if you are taking narcotics.
- Do not use hot packs.
- Do not participate in sports or workouts for six weeks.
- Do not scratch or touch the incisions sights. You may use Benadryl by mouth for itching.
- Do not smoke
- Do not drink alcohol after surgery for one week. Never mix narcotics with alcohol

Remember

Swelling & Bruising:

Swelling and bruising are normal and usually improve within a few weeks. Swelling may shift toward your feet due to gravity. Full healing takes time—often 6 months to a year.



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Pain Relief & Medications:

- You may take Tylenol if needed, but don't take it along with your prescribed pain medication if it already contains Tylenol. Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), and similar meds for 2 weeks before and after surgery—they can increase bleeding. If you're unsure about a medication, ask your pharmacist.
- If you notice itching, rash, wheezing, or throat tightness, stop all medications and call our office—it may be an allergic reaction.

Sun Exposure & Skin Care:

- Avoid direct sun on your breasts for at least one month. Use sunscreen regularly for one year after surgery. You may apply moisturizers or creams after 3 weeks, but avoid the incision sites until they are fully closed.