

POST OPERATIVE INFORMATION

Please call 202-444-9302 to schedule your post-operative appointment or if you have questions during office hours (8:30-5:00). Many patients are seen by our Physician Assistant, Cathalene Blake, during their first post-operative appointments if Dr. Baker is unavailable. You may also call her at 202-444-6598 if you have questions. She returns phone calls at the end of each clinic day. If you need a call sooner you can call Laurie at 202-444-9302 and she can route your call accordingly.

After Hours Care:

Call 202-444-7243 and ask for the Plastic Surgery Resident on call.

Eye Surgery:

You may be given a tube of antibiotic ophthalmic ointment to apply to your incisions twice a day. If you are having lower eyelid surgery, you will need to apply ointment in the lower eyelid at bedtime. Please apply cold compresses to your eyes, as often as tolerated, for 48-72 hours following surgery to reduce swelling. Sleep with your head elevated. You may use artificial tears if your eyes are dry, but do not use Visine.

Nose Surgery:

Please apply cold compresses to the under eye area as often as tolerated for the first 48-72 hours following surgery to reduce swelling. Do not get your cast wet. Sleep with your head elevated. Do not blow your nose or insert anything into your nose. Try not to sneeze. Clean incision with a solution of 50% water and 50% hydrogen peroxide and apply Bacitracin ointment twice daily. If you have packing in your nose, it will be removed 24-48 hours after surgery. Please call the office to schedule that appointment. Sutures are removed 5-7 days after surgery. Casts are removed 7-14 days after surgery.

Jaw Surgery:

You will notice that swelling will increase and peak at 48-72 hours after surgery. It will slowly begin to subside after that point. You may notice that your entire face swells, including your eyes. You may apply cold compresses to the jaw for the first 48-72 hours to help reduce swelling if you would like. Sleep with your head elevated. You will need to be on a liquid diet while your jaw is banded. A syringe will be provided to facilitate drinking. Most patients lose 10-15 pounds after surgery. Food is required for healing, so please make sure you are getting plenty of calories each day. Many patients feel nauseated after surgery, so call the office if you require anti-nausea medication beyond what is prescribed in the hospital. Bands are usually removed 1-2 weeks after surgery. Once the bands are removed you may slowly progress from liquid diet to a soft diet. You may not return to a normal diet until 4 weeks after surgery and the progression should be done slowly.

Facelift:

You will have a head wrap in place after surgery. Please do not remove the bandages before your first appointment. You may also have a drain in place. Please call the office to schedule to have your drain removed. The drain is usually removed 24 hours after

surgery. Sleep with your head elevated. Do not eat foods that require excessive chewing. Once bandages are removed, apply Bacitracin ointment to incisions twice daily. Sutures will be removed approximately 7 days after surgery.

Drain Care:

If you have drains in place, you will need to empty the drain and record the amount of fluid twice daily. Please record the amount of fluid from each drain separately. We will need to see the amount of drainage in a 24 hour period so we know when it is safe to remove the drains. Please bring your drain record with you to the office. Apply antibiotic such as Bacitracin to the drain sites prior to showering and if the drain site appears red or irritated. The normal color of the fluid should be red, pink, or clear yellow. Call if the drainage becomes foul smelling or cloudy.

Wound/Incision Care:

You may shower after your first post-op visit unless otherwise directed. In the meantime, please sponge bathe as it is important to maintain good hygiene. All dressing should be left in place as they will be removed at your first post-op appointment. You may have clear adhesive glue over your incision. This will slowly peel off over the next few weeks and you may shower with it in place. Garments and bras should be worn day and night with two 30-60 minute breaks daily during which you may bathe and wash the garments. Garments may be hand washed or placed in the washing machine on a delicate cycle. If the garment feels as if it is cutting into you, you may loosen the clips or zipper to relieve some pressure.

Diet:

Diet restrictions will be specified prior to leaving the hospital as certain procedures necessitate you maintain a soft or liquid diet for a period of time after surgery. Your throat may be sore following general anesthesia. You may try over the counter throat lozenges. No alcoholic beverages while taking pain medication. We recommend a high fiber diet and lots of liquids while taking pain medication in order to prevent constipation. You may also want to take an over the counter stool softener such as Pericolace while taking pain medication.

Activity:

No heavy lifting (greater than 10 pounds) and no strenuous activity for 2-4 weeks. Facial surgery and fracture patients should avoid contact sports for 6 weeks after surgery. We will specify permissible activity levels as you proceed through your post-operative course. You should not drive while taking pain medication.

Reasons to Call:

Temperature of 101.5 or above
Excessive drainage and/or bleeding
Increased redness
Increased swelling or abnormal swelling of one side compared to the other
Pain that is not tolerable after taking pain medication
Inability to urinate within 6 hours of leaving the hospital