



## Post-Operative Instructions RHYTIDECTOMY (Face Lift)

1. Initially you will leave our office with a compression dressing wrapped around your head, which will aid in swelling. If you find the compression dressing in to tight you may make a cut no greater than 1 inch in the area of the "Adams apple" to alleviate the tension of the dressing.
2. For the first 10 days, it is best to keep your head elevated, to help decrease swelling and bruising. For the first several days after surgery, you may be most comfortable in a recliner chair or lying on a sofa with your head elevated. You may want to place a cold pack (ice chips in a "baggie" or frozen peas) over the front part of your face. After 36 hours, ice does little to prevent swelling, but you may continue to use it if it feels better. When sleeping, keep your head elevated above the level of your heart. Extra pillows under your head or a blanket or two under the mattress works well. You do not need to sleep completely upright.
3. After several days, you will be given a head dressing that you will use as directed by Dr. Guyette. This is the time to begin cleaning the incision lines and stitches. Twice a day, wash the stitches and incision lines gently with soap and water, and place a light coating of A&D ointment. Rubber drains may be present behind the earlobes to allow for drainage. If present, these will be removed several days after surgery. Keep the pressure dressing in place until otherwise directed from Dr. Guyette or staff.
4. Swelling and bruising are normal body responses to surgery. Swelling usually peaks the second or third day after surgery then begins to decrease. Most of the swelling is gone after 10-14 days, but the remainder takes months to completely resolve. Taking medications as prescribed and following these instructions will help minimize swelling and bruising and promote quick healing.
5. Good nutrition and proper hydration is very important in optimizing healing after surgery. Make sure you maintain a well balanced diet.
6. Light exercise, such as evening walks, can begin the day following surgery. Do not lift heavy objects, bend over, or return to strenuous activity until instructed by Dr. Guyette or his staff. On average, moderate exercise can begin 7-10 days after surgery and vigorous exercise 3-4 weeks after surgery.
7. If you are able to take Ibuprofen, take over-the-counter Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) 200 mg tablets, 3 tablets, 4 times a day, for 3-7 days after surgery. You may take Ibuprofen alone or take the prescription pain medication with Ibuprofen at the same time, if necessary. Be sure to eat prior to taking your medications. Do not drive for 4 hours after taking narcotic medications.