

# *Postoperative Instructions: Browlift*

## **Pain Medication:**

- Take 2x paracetamol tablets (Panamax, Panadol) every 6 hours regularly for the first 3-5 days.
- Take Ibuprofen (Nurofen or Brufen) 400 mg with breakfast, lunch and dinner as required (always with food). Do not take Ibuprofen on an empty stomach. Do not take Ibuprofen if you have asthma, or known allergic reactions to non-steroidal anti-inflammatories such as Aspirin, Naproxen, Naprosyn or Feldene.
- You may be discharged from hospital with stronger pain killers, such as Tramadol, Endone (oxycodone) or Palexia. For severe pain, take as instructed on the packet if required.

## **Ice Packs, Swelling and Bruising:**

- Place a bag of peas or icepack over your whole forehead. Change the bags every half an hour so that the coldness is constant. This is effective in decreasing bruising and swelling if done repeatedly for the first 4 hours after surgery. You can also repeat the process again any time you notice any swelling or pain within the first two days after surgery.
- Do not lie down as the swelling and bruising will worsen. Elevate the head as much as possible. We would recommend sleeping on 2-3 extra pillows at night and avoid sleeping on your face or your sides.
- It is not uncommon to have swollen eyelids for 3-5 days. Sometimes this can make opening the eyes very difficult. Ice-packs can be used to relieve your swelling. The swelling is usually at its worst around day 2-3 after the operation.
- It is unusual for the swelling or pain to worsen after 5 days. If this occurs, you may have an infection, please contact the rooms.
- The Bruising around your eyes and across your forehead will start to improve after 1 week, in some, up to 2 weeks.

## **Dressings & Hygiene:**

You may shower and wash your face and hair 24 hours after surgery. You can wash over the suture lines and pat them dry very gently. Apply Vaseline to the stitches three times a day. Keep the areas clean. DO NOT apply any makeup or hair products on your stitches. Avoid strenuous activities which can result in sweating around your suture lines.

## **Sleeping:**

Sleep with your head elevated on at least 2-3 pillows for 3 days after surgery. You can flip from side to side, but don't spend all night on one side or that particular eye and forehead will be more swollen than the other! Please avoid sleeping face-down. To ensure a good night sleep, take your pain medication prior to sleeping. It is not unusual to be particularly sleepy and tired after an operation or an anaesthetic. Take time to rest as needed.

## **Diet:**

Recovering from a general anaesthetic is like recovering from the flu. Start with clear liquids; then advance to soft, non-spicy foods over the next 2 days. If you have been prescribed anti-nausea medication, please take as instructed if required. Vomiting will increase blood flow to your face and can cause worsening of bruising/swelling or even bleeding from your wound. It is important for you to take your anti-nausea medication as soon as you feel nauseous to prevent onset of vomiting. If your

nausea and vomiting persists after 2-3 days, please ring our office for further advice. Make sure that you include plenty of fibre in your diet to prevent constipation from the pain-killers.

#### **Activity:**

- Remain reclined or seated, and quiet for the first 24 hours. Avoid bending over with your head down and any heavy lifting, pushing, pulling or straining for at least 3 days. All these activities may cause bleeding, bruising and swelling of your forehead and eyelids.
- You should be able to drive when you can see clearly and the swelling in your eyelids have improved.
- You can start exercising at 25% of your normal level after 4 weeks, gradually increase your level of activities over the following 4 weeks to follow. Intermittent swelling of your eyelids and forehead with activity and tiredness is not unusual in the first 3 months.

#### **Make-up:**

At your first follow-up appointment, your wounds will be reviewed. Your sutures are usually removed around 10-14 days, this may be at your first or second appointment dependent on whether the wound look healed enough. You will be able to apply makeup on your face once your sutures have been removed and your wound has healed adequately. Often it is approximately 2 weeks before makeup is recommended over the suture lines.

#### **Follow-up:**

Your first follow-up is usually 10-14 days after surgery for wound check and removal of sutures. This is with one of our experienced nurses in the dressing clinic. If you are having your eyelids done (blepharoplasty) at the same time, you may have an appointment around 5-7 days for your eyelid sutures to be removed. Make sure you call the office to establish date and time if you have not already received your first post-operative appointment.

You will have a review appointment with your surgeon around 8-12 weeks after surgery. This is to allow your swelling and wound to settle. Postoperative photos will be taken during your consultation. At this appointment, your scars will also be assessed and more scar therapy may be discussed with you if required. This is usually your final review, but further appointments may be made to follow if necessary.

#### **What to Expect after Brow Lift:**

- While your forehead is swollen, there may be some asymmetry of your eyebrows and upper eyelids. The appearance may also look unnatural. This will improve as swelling subsides.
- Most swelling and bruising will persist for at least six weeks, up to three months, sometimes even longer. This is very common. You must be patient to allow everything to heal and settle naturally.
- To prevent postoperative bleeding, do not cough excessively or blow your nose for 3 days after surgery. If you have to cough and sneeze, try to minimise the impact by allowing the air to escape via an open mouth.
- It is not uncommon to have numb patches on your forehead and scalp after surgery. These patches will improve over time but may not return to completely normal sensations. When the nerves recover, you may experience tingling, buzz, or electric shock sensation periodically over your forehead or scalp. This is expected, and will disappear after a few months. It is strongly recommended for you to massage the skin over these tingling/sensitive areas 5-6 times a day

to 'desensitise' these nerves. Some people will have permanent numbness around the scar and as well a small patch of skin in the scalp.

- The irregularities, pleats and puckers that are around your stitches at the hairline will settle. They smooth out with time and massage, but can again take several weeks.
- The scars may take up to 6-12 weeks to mature. If they become lumpy and pronounced, you will be asked to commence silicone gel therapy with regular massage for 3 months. This will be discussed with you at your review appointment with your surgeon.
- Remember, surgery takes time to settle, often patients look better at 3 months than at 2 weeks after surgery.

**Please Ring the Office if:**

- You have a temperature over 38 degrees Celsius 48 hours after surgery. (A low-grade fever up to 37.5 degrees Celsius for 1-2 days is normal after surgery)
- The swelling worsens after 5 days.
- Severe pain behind the eyes despite taking your pain killers.
- Severe headache despite taking your pain killers.
- Change in your vision (loss of colour, severe blurring, black or white spots, loss of vision).
- Copious yellow discharge from your wound (please note minor oozing from the wound is normal in the first 3 days).

**Your Medications:**

- Antibiotics: Please start your antibiotics as soon as possible after your procedure. Follow the instruction on the box as dispensed by the pharmacist. Please complete the course.
- If you have any vomiting or diarrhoea associated with either the antibiotics or pain-killers, please cease them immediately.
- Blood Thinners: If you have stopped your blood thinners before surgery, you can restart it the day after your procedure. Please take your usual dose at your usual times, unless otherwise instructed.
- Diabetic Medication: If you have stopped or adjusted your diabetic medications prior to surgery because you were fasting, you can restart it as soon as you have started eating and drinking normally again. Please take your usual dose at your usual times. Please do not restart it if you are vomiting.

**Your Postoperative Appointment:**

Your follow-up appointment will be with our practice nurse in the dressing clinic

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ at

- Sunnybank Australis Specialist Centre Clinic
- Everton Park Clinic

**Contact Telephone Numbers:**

During Office Hours and Non-Urgent Matters – 3353 6165

After hours and for Emergencies only – the hospital you were discharged from