

Postoperative Instruction Sheet

Facial Flaps

Following your operation, you can expect:

1. Oozing and even bleeding. This is normal. When this occurs, you should:
Apply pressure with a cool pack – for 15 to 20 minutes each hour and elevate the area (sit up rather than lie down) You should find that the bleeding will settle with 15-20 minutes of continuous pressure.
2. Some *pain* and *discomfort* is expected. Take **Paracetamol** as required.
Applying a COOL PACK and PRESSURE helps treat the discomfort.
3. Bruising is normal. This will worsen over the first two days then begin to settle.
4. You should keep your wound dry for the first two days. The wound can then be gently washed in the shower and pat dry. **Apply ointment/paraffin three times per day**

SURFACE SUTURES

If you have surface sutures, you should keep your wounds clean and dry for the first two days. Then you can wash the wounds in the shower and pat dry.

You should then lightly apply Vaseline or Chlorsig ointment (if given) to your wounds three to four times a day to keep moist and prevent scab formation. Between each application you should gently wash and dry the wound.

Keeping your wounds dry and clean will help prevent infection

RING THE ROOMS IF YOU NOTICE: increased redness or swelling, drainage of blood, pus or other fluid OR increased pain

REMEMBER:

- Rest** (very Important)
- Ice** (cool do not freeze)
- Compression**
- Elevation** (sit up, do not lie down)

Dr Bayley will advise you when you are to make a post op review with our nurse for removal of your sutures, this is usually 1 week post procedure. **Please phone the rooms to make this appointment**

MASSAGE

Massaging your scar is important to achieve the optimal result. It will also give you the best possible scar in the shortest time. You will find that the wound scar will thicken over the first 4 to 6 weeks postoperatively. Massaging will help settle this. The scar is often also red. This is normal. It simply reflects an increased blood supply to the scar during the maturation phase.

Starting one week after surgery, once the steri-strip is removed, you can massage the wound with moisturiser/Vitamin E/Bio Oil. You should massage the scar for a few minutes twice a day. In the **first week** of massaging, you should massage in a soft circular motion. In the **second and subsequent weeks** you should massage firmly, applying pressure to the scar and/or flap. Where possible start applying pressure between two fingers, in areas such as the rim of the nose, the ear, or the lip.

The aim of firm pressure is to remove the oedema and swelling from the incision scar. This will help improve the contour of the operated area. It is normal to expect the wound to be tender. Massaging will help the tenderness and sensitivity to settle. Stop massaging the scar when the scar starts to soften. It is recommended to massage for 12 weeks for best scar results.

In the second week, you should start pinching the scar to help prevent scar indenting. Pinching up the scar will also help prevent indenting of the scar, by attempting to stretch the scar. You should expect the scar and flap to be mostly settled by six weeks, but still pinky red in colour. Some people will find that it will take a number of months for the scar to start to settle. Generally, you will find that the scar will continue to improve and fade over the next 6 to 12 months.