



Lindsey Pennington, MD
FACIAL PLASTICS

Postoperative Instructions: Submental Liposuction

Uncomplicated and early healing depends on how well you care for yourself after surgery. Please read the following instructions carefully before your surgery and ask us any questions you may have.

After Surgery

- Following your surgery, you must have another adult stay with you the first night. You should plan on remaining within thirty miles of the location of your surgery for the first night.
- **It is also important for you to keep your head elevated the evening after surgery as well as for the first two weeks following surgery.** This can be done by sleeping in a recliner tilted at 45 degrees. This is the preferred method for recovery and tends to be the most comfortable. If there is absolutely no way to have a recliner available to you after surgery, then sleeping with pillows propped up behind you in bed is a second option.
- It is also recommended to use an airplane pillow while laying down to prevent you from lying on the side of your face and head.

There will be a small incision under your chin with sutures (stitches) in it. You will have a light wrap dressing to stabilize the chin tissues and minimize swelling.

Daily Care

- You can use ice for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off **ONLY IF** this was not done in conjunction with a facelift. Swelling usually peaks on day 3 and usually subsides after that. It is not uncommon for some minor swelling to last 2-5 weeks
- Compression dressing, this should be worn 24/7 for the first 2 weeks, and then a minimum every night for the next four weeks.
- Gently go over suture lines twice daily with hydrogen peroxide diluted with distilled water (**50%hydrogen peroxide & 50% distilled water**) on a Q-tip. After this again with a Q-tip apply a liberal amount of vitamin A&D ointment and reapply compression dressing.
- Dr. Pennington will advise you on when you may shower or bathe. Be sure to use a gentle shampoo such as Johnsons Baby Shampoo, only after cleared by Dr. Pennington to wash hair.
- Drain, if present, will be managed daily by Dr. Pennington, until removed.
- Stitches, if present, will be removed the 4-7 day after surgery.

What to expect

- **Discomfort** - is to be expected, the medications provided will help reduce the discomfort, but a baseline level is to be expected post operatively. Do not take medications any other way than prescribed. Do NOT take NSAIDS (**Ibuprofen, Aleve, aspirin etc.**) until cleared by MD. Stool softeners and hydration are VERY important post op to help avoid constipation that can develop with pain and anti-nausea medications.
- **Swelling** - is normal, if excessive swelling develops, is asymmetric (one side much more than the other) or is extremely painful, please contact Dr. Pennington. Things to do to minimize this swelling include keeping your head elevated as much as possible over the first two to three weeks, avoiding high salt diet, avoiding bending over or heavy lifting for the first three weeks, and avoiding prolonged sun exposure for the first two to three months.

- **Discoloration** - Bruising will vary like swelling from person to person. Discoloration and bruising, this is temporary. Most bruising and discoloration should resolve over the first two weeks. Make up, with Dr. Pennington's permission, can be applied ten days to two weeks after surgery.
- **Numbness** - Your neck may be numb following surgery. This is normal and will subside over the coming weeks to months. Unusual sensations, pins and needles, and occasionally mild discomfort may occur as these nerves regenerate over time.
- **Bleeding** - If bleeding does occur, lie down with your head elevated. Try to relax. You may take a pain pill. Place cool compresses over your neck just as you did after surgery. You may apply light pressure to where bleeding is present. Wait 15 minutes. If bleeding persists at this point, please contact our office.
- **Depression** - It is not uncommon for patients to go through a period of mild depression after cosmetic surgery. This typically occurs the second week after surgery while some of the swelling and bruising persist and yet the patient is anxious to see a final result. Realize this is a temporary condition and things will improve. Focus on diligently following the wound care as well as other activities to help divert your mind. Keeping up daily routines and schedules can help decrease this.
- **Cosmetics** - Make-up may be applied to untreated areas following surgery. Avoid any areas with stitches, abrasions, or over the area where liposuction was done. Make-up may be applied 24 hrs. after suture removal. Make-up prior to suture removal may delay wound healing, increase risk of infection if comes into contact with treated areas too soon.

Restrictions

- No strenuous exercise for at least two weeks.
- **No** heavy lifting for three weeks.
- Avoid turning the head or stretching the neck, it will be stiff, turn with your entire body and shoulders when head needs to be turned
- **No** pullover clothing for two weeks.
- Avoid hard chewing foods for two weeks.
- Avoid yawning or wide mouth opening for two weeks.
- If sneezing, sneeze with the mouth open for two weeks.
- No driving for one, preferably two weeks after surgery.
- No contact sports for six weeks.
- No smoking, no nicotine products for a MINIMUM of 2 weeks post op
- No alcohol for 2 weeks post op
- Do not shower or wash hair or face until cleared by Dr. Pennington

Call Dr. Pennington if you develop:

- ✓Fever greater than 100.4
- ✓Sudden swelling or discoloration
- ✓Hemorrhage
- ✓Drainage from wound edges or other signs of infection
- ✓Development of any drug reaction
- ✓Shortness of breath or chest pain, may present directly to ER, please call Dr. Pennington in addition to going to ER.

We will follow you through this entire process but be patient. Please do not hesitate to ever contact our office (318)216-5366.