



WATERFRONT

PRIVATE HOSPITAL

FACE/ NECK LIFT SURGERY AFTERCARE

The advice below is general and will apply to the average patient. It should be a guide. All patients are different, and some will recover quicker than others.

Before you leave the hospital

Medications – You will receive painkillers and antibiotic ointment to apply to your suture line once you have removed your bandage.

Change of dressings – Your bandage will be changed before you leave the hospital (if you are in overnight), and a light bandage will be put on (you should remove this after 48 hours, and you may apply a thin layer of the antibiotic ointment provided to your suture lines).

Follow-up appointments for dressing clinics – You will be handed a card with details of your first follow-up appointment and contact details for the ward if you have any concerns once you get home.

Have someone to take you home. It would be best to have a **responsible adult** with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.

When you get home

Day 2 (48 hours)

Remove your bandage – remove the light bandage and underlying dressings you have on.



Showering – You can shower and wash your hair. Use a gentle shampoo.

Apply antibiotic ointment to your wounds over the stitches **twice a day**.

Week 1

Get plenty of rest, and don't overdo things. Take things easy for the first 7-10 days and relax.

You will experience some **discomfort**. **Take pain medication as prescribed**.

Do not take any blood thinning medications like aspirin; avoid herbal/ other supplements during this period.

Showering/ bathing - You can continue to shower and get your wounds wet. Keep your wounds clean and **continue using your antibiotic ointment** during this week.

Wash and clean your incision site with warm water and soap twice daily and pat dry.

Swelling and bruising – your face may be swollen and bruised, especially if you have had eyelid surgery and/ or fat transfer to the cheeks. This may worsen before it improves and may travel down your face (with gravity). Try to keep your head upright and avoid stooping over.

Sleeping position - Sleep with your head raised on a couple of pillows, especially during the first week.

Keep mobile, as this will reduce the risk of blood clots in the legs.

Clothing – Wear clothing that is easy to remove, and avoid tight tops that require removal over your head as they might catch on your suture lines/ ears.

Your mood may fluctuate after surgery, and you may doubt having had the procedure! Don't worry; this is common, and you will feel better as the swelling and appearance improve.

You may have some discomfort and bruising around your **thigh** or **tummy** if you have had fat transfer to your cheeks/ eyes.

Follow a balanced diet. Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may wish to add more raw fruit and fibre to your diet. Increase fluid intake.

Glasses – They may be difficult to wear while your bandage is on. After that, glasses may be worn with care.

Avoid bending over or lifting anything heavy.

Avoid smoking for at least two weeks, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

Avoid alcohol when taking pain medications. Even if you are not taking pain medications, it is advisable to avoid alcohol for three weeks as it can cause fluid retention, which may worsen swelling.

First nurse appointment at the end of week 1

You will have an appointment after 6-7 days to have the stitches in front of your ears removed (and any eyelid stitches). The nurses can answer any questions.



Typical appearance 7 days after lower face/ neck lift surgery and removal of the stitches from in front of the ears.

Second nurse appointment 10 days?

You may have a second appointment with the nurses at around 10 days to remove the remaining stitches in your hairline and behind your ears.

When can I go back to work?

Return to work will depend on your recovery and job. We recommend taking at least one week off work. Most patients will take 10-14 days off and consider returning to work once all their stitches have been removed.

Week 2

Your bruising and swelling will continue to improve during this week.

Your remaining stitches will be removed around day 10.

Do not use makeup or other cosmetics on your external incisions until your wound is healed (usually by three weeks).

Driving – You can resume driving at this stage.

Weeks 3 and 4

All the bruising and 90% of the swelling should have settled over this period.

You can use makeup once your wounds are healed.

When can I fly after surgery?

Check with your airline and insurance company before flying. It'll depend on your airline's regulations and the flight duration. If in doubt, please ask your surgeon.

Risk of DVT

If you're flying after recent surgery, especially when your mobility has been restricted, you're at an increased risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT), a blood clot in one of the deep veins in your body, usually in your legs.

Guidance

For medium-haul (3-6 hours) and long-haul (6-12 hours) and as a guide, allow **2-3 weeks** after facelift surgery. You could fly around 1-2 weeks after surgery for short haul (less than 3 hours) flights. You can try to reduce your risk of DVT, such as drinking plenty of water, using your Ted stockings, and moving around on the plane. The risk of developing a travel-related DVT is low, even if you're classed as moderate to high risk.

Travel Insurance

Check your travel insurance policy carefully, as you may need to inform the insurance company that you have recently had surgery.

1 month and onwards

You will feel back to normal after 1 month.

Your scars will continue to improve over this period.

Any numbness will also improve over this time.

Exercise

You can resume gentle exercise after 4 weeks and build up to more strenuous exercise by the end of week 6.

Avoid swimming for 3 months as chlorine can irritate your scars.

Scar care

Healing is gradual, but facelift scars generally heal well.

It is helpful to massage your scars with a plain moisturiser or bio-oil. Some areas of your scars may feel lumpy (especially in the hairline) – these will settle over weeks and months.

When to call/ get in touch

- If you have increased swelling or bruising, which is not settling and feels hard and painful.
- Bleeding, which does not stop.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have a temperature over 38 degrees Celsius.
- If you have any **persistent** yellowish or greenish discharge from the incisions.

If concerned, please contact the hospital where your procedure was performed.

Further advice

If you are uncertain about anything or require further advice, please get in touch with us at hello@waterfronthospital.co.uk