

SPRINGFIELD ENT & FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

3555 South Culpepper Circle
Springfield, Missouri 65804
(417) 887-3855

FACE LIFT (RHYTIDECTOMY)

PLEASE, AVOID TAKING AVOID NON-TYLENOL PAIN MEDICATION SUCH AS IBUPROFEN, MOTRIN, ALEVE, ASPIRIN, AND ADVIL FOR 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO SURGERY AS THIS INCREASES THE CHANCE OF BLEEDING AND BRUISING. VITAMIN E AND GARLIC ALSO ELEVATE THIS RISK. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY MEDICINE.

We wish your surgical experience to be as positive and free of stress as possible. Please contact our office if you have any concerns; all questions are important when it comes to your health.

Goals of rhytidectomy

- Improvement of laxity in the lower two-thirds of the face.
- Particularly effective for loose skin along the jaw line (jowls), beneath the jaw, and at the front part of the neck.
- Generally less beneficial for creases beside the nose or mouth.
- Not helpful for “crows feet” beside the eyes.

Possible complimentary procedures - several other surgical procedures may enhance the result of rhytidectomy and are often performed at the same time or at a later date to address other concerns.

- Liposuction - beneath chin and lower jaw to remove excess fat.
- Brow lift - to elevate droopiness of forehead and eyebrows.
- Blepharoplasty – for rejuvenation of the eyelid areas.
- Treatment for heavy creases beside mouth with Restylane, LipoSculpture (lipo – injection) or other techniques.
- Procedures for wrinkles such as Botox, chemical peel, or laser resurfacing.

Scheduling and preparation for surgery

- Scheduling – surgery scheduling may be done during a cosmetic consultation or a later date by telephone.
- Preoperative visit - office visit when a physical examination shall be performed and final discussion held about the surgery. You shall receive instructions on the date and time of surgery, when to stop eating beforehand, and other issues.
- Preoperative medical clearance - some patients may need a visit with their regular physician to be sure that there are no medical concerns regarding surgery or anesthesia.
- Hospital / surgery center appointment - held at the facility where surgery will be performed. Any further instructions are provided and this is the opportunity to discuss anesthesia.
- Postoperative visits - office visits held 1 - 2 days after surgery, 5 - 10 days after (for suture removal), and then typically 1, 6, and 12 months afterward.
- Photographs - taken before surgery and at various times afterward.

The rhytidectomy procedure

- Facelift may be performed with either local anesthesia plus sedation (twilight anesthesia) or with general anesthesia (patient completely asleep). General anesthesia often used when this is performed along with other procedures.
- Usually outpatient / same day surgery in which one comes in and goes home the same day. A patient may stay overnight in a hospital if this is performed with other procedures and involves a longer operative time.
- Skin incisions begin in the temple area in front of the ear, run just in front of / behind the ear, and extend into the hair area behind the ear.
- The procedure lasts about 3 ½ to 4 hours - longer if other procedures are done as well.

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- The areas of the face and neck that require treatment are separated from underlying tissues and elevated / tightened. In some cases, an incision is made just under the chin in order to improve vertical bands of the platysma muscle under the skin in the front of the neck area.
- A compressive dressing is placed around the head and face; this is kept on 24 to 48 hours.
- Often, small drainage tubes are brought out behind the ear to remove any fluid that collects in the surgical area. These usually are removed the day after surgery.

What to expect after surgery

- Recuperation – because rhytidectomy can offer significant benefit, it is associated with a fair amount of recovery time and one should allow up to two weeks. Bruising can persist an additional week but may be camouflaged with makeup.
- Dressing – Patients are seen back in the office the day after surgery to remove (and occasionally replace) the dressing on the face. Drains, if placed, will be removed also.
- Pain - a moderate amount of pain should be expected and you will be given a prescription for medication. Please avoid aspirin, Motrin, Advil, Aleve or other non - Tylenol pain medications because increase your risk of bleeding.
- Bruising & swelling - always occurs and will probably extend down to the lower neck. These last for several weeks. It helps to keep the head elevated for 3 days after surgery. Sleeping in a recliner chair helps reduce this.
- Incision care - keep the area dry 24 - 48 hours as instructed. Incisions must be kept very moist with antibiotic ointment placed 4 times daily for 10 days or until healed. Crusting should be softened with ointment and gently removed with hydrogen peroxide and a Q - tip.
- Sutures - removed 5 - 7 days after surgery. Surgical staples are often used in the hair behind the ears and are removed 7 - 10 days after surgery.
- Bathing - is normally fine 1 - 2 days after surgery as instructed.
- Driving - should be avoided about 7 days after surgery and while on pain medication.
- Diet - no restrictions except to minimize chewing (and facial movement) for 1 week.

Risks

Facelift is a very safe procedure. However, it is important to recognize that even the most minor surgeries may result in infection, bleeding, reaction to anesthesia, or even death. Although unlikely, possible risks include:

- Unfavorable healing, scarring, or prominence of the incisions.
- Injury to nerves that supply the muscles of the face (branches of the facial nerve) and nerves, which supply sensation possibly causing numbness, weakness, or paralysis of the area.
- Asymmetry - everyone has some difference from one side of the face to the other. Some degree of asymmetry exists before surgery and should be expected afterward.
- Blood or fluid collection under the skin that would require drainage.
- Facelifts and smoking never mix. Patients must be comfortable with smoking cessation for 3 weeks before surgery and until healing is complete. Even with this, smokers have increased risk of infection and unfavorable healing. Plus, smoking accelerates the appearance of skin age so the result will last longer if one quits!
- All cosmetic surgeries may benefit from further treatment or "touch - up" procedures.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your health care. Please let us know how we may make your surgical experience more pleasant or better address your questions and concerns.

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