



preparing for surgery



Things to avoid at least two weeks prior to the surgery:

- All over the counter pain medications in order to reduce bruising and bleeding, except for Panadol/Paracetamol (Acetaminophen)
- Diet pills
- All products containing aspirin as well as all anti inflammatory products that interfere with the normal clotting should be also avoided for two weeks after surgery
- All products containing vitamin E, dietary supplements, herbal teas, fish oil capsules and any herbal products especially ginkgo biloba and ginseng, which may increase the risk of bleeding.
- Alcohol consumption should be restricted to one glass of wine or beer per day. Larger alcohol volumes may affect the liver, preventing blood clotting.
- Absolutely no recreational drugs are permitted.
- Stop smoking at least two weeks prior to the surgery. Nicotine reduces circulation and may affect the healing process and cause scarring and other complications.

If you have experienced problems with abnormal bleeding prior to surgery, due to dental work or menstrual cycles, please notify our practice promptly.

If you are having face lift surgery, you may colour your hair a few days before, as you will not be able to colour it for several weeks after surgery. Leave hair long for better concealment. Do not wear any makeup on the day of surgery.



the night before the surgery

- Do not have anything to eat or drink (including water) after midnight on the night before the surgery. You may take necessary medications with a very small amount of water.
- Remove all remnants of makeup
- Take a shower and wash your face, hair and other surgical sites with antibacterial soap before you go to bed. Reduction of skin bacteria will decrease the risk of infection.

the day of surgery

- Remove all remnants of makeup and shower again, wash your face, hair and other surgical sites with antibacterial soap on the morning of surgery.
- Wear loose fitting clothing. Your top should button or zip up the front.
- Do not wear a pullover top, it may be difficult to put on after surgery.
- Slip-on shoes are more convenient and comfortable.
- All outer clothing will be removed and you will be given a surgical gown to wear during surgery.
- Remove contact lenses.
- Bring a scarf or sunglasses to cover your dressings after surgery.
- Bring all prescribed medications with you the day of surgery, especially if you have an overnight stay. Inhalers for asthma, blood pressure medications, and heart medications are especially important.



the “surgical let down” period

After the surgery, when anaesthesia wears off, you may experience post-surgical depression, also known as the “Surgical Letdown Period”; however, this is not necessarily the case for every patient. The post-surgical stress syndrome, constipation and a general state of disarray can also be caused by pain medication and antibiotics.

The sight of your operation after the bandages and sutures have come off may not be encouraging. You will have bruises, your face/body will be swollen and you may feel uncomfortable.

According to Hamid Massiha, M.D. depression is very normal: “Quite frequently patients experience a brief period of “let-down” or depression after cosmetic surgery. Some may subconsciously have expected to feel and look better “instantly,” even though they rationally understand that this will not be the case. Patients commonly question their decision during the first few days after surgery. As the healing occurs, these thoughts usually disappear quickly. If you feel depressed, understanding that this is a “natural” phase of the healing process may help you to cope with this emotional state.”

A good idea would be for you to write down what you expect prior to the surgery so you can acknowledge afterwards when you are feeling blue. This will help you keep things in perspective and prepare your mind. It will also remind your brain that you knew exactly what was going to happen during this healing period. If these feelings do not subside in time, your surgeon can refer you to a therapist.

Your surgeon can prescribe a mild stool softener like Colace® or even natural remedies such as eating Daikon (a Chinese root vegetable) after finishing your medications. These will help ease your digestive problems, feeling bloated or abdominal pain. It is vital that you drink plenty of water. To reduce bruising, you may take Arnica tablets.

After surgery you will be instructed to stay in bed and perform only low impact activities. For two weeks following surgery, you will need to sleep in an upright position, with pillows to support your body. The bruises and soreness will gradually fade, and so will the feeling of depression.



Note to the self

“This is for me to remember that feelings of sadness post-operatively are normal. I realize that this does not happen to all people, but I am aware that I may be one of those who could experience this. I know that I need to be patient and think positive to promote better healing and relaxation. I know that I need to be patient during my healing period, and should not pass judgement. It is important to follow my surgeon’s instructions to increase my chances of a great result. I do know that stress and anxiety can only make matters worse and I will try my best to think positive and stay calm.

I am aware that after surgery I may be sore, tired, irritable unsure of my decision of having surgery, possibly depressed, bloated, anxious, restless, and unable to sleep at times.

During the recovery period, my face or treatment area may be asymmetrical, crooked, swollen, bruised, tender to the touch, firm or hard, irritated from the tape or anaesthesia and I may experience sharp pains or numbness, or acne break out.

I also realize that even the daily subtle changes or flaws that I may see in the mirror may not be visible to others as I am my own worst critic. I do realize once I heal that the changes can be seen with the help of “before” and “after” photos. I am also aware that if many months from now, after I am healed, I can always approach my surgeon regarding my dissatisfaction.

I know I must not take out my insecurities or anger on my significant other, family or friends, even though sometimes it will be very hard for me to refrain from venting my frustration or sadness. I know I need to keep my chin up and let my body and mind heal because surgery is an invasive procedure that can trigger many emotions. I know that I can always get support from my loved ones and friends, be they “in the flesh” or online.

I know this state of disarray and insecurity is only temporary. Today I will smile and remain patient because tomorrow will be another day that will bring me one day closer to being fully healed.”

For help with your recovery, please print out our “motivational” Post-operative Emotions Reminder List.