



# THE AESTHETIC CENTER

## **Direct Brow Lift** **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS** ***Dr. William H. Bearden***

Please follow these post-operative instructions carefully to ensure the most successful surgical outcome.

### **COLD ICE COMPRESS**

**Apply gentle ice packs to the surgical area for 30 min out of every hour for the first 48 hours while you are awake and 1 time during the first night.**

Ice helps with the pain, decreases swelling, and reduces bruising. Ice does not help as much after 48 hours. Do not put ice cubes directly on your skin. Put green peas in a zip-lock bag. Moisten gauze with water and put the wet gauze between your eyelids and the bag of peas.

**You will have steri-strips (like tape) on top of your incisions. They will fall off over the course of 2-3 days. You DO NOT need to reapply the steri-strips. Apply the antibiotic ointment on top of the steri-strips and after they fall off for a total of 2 weeks.**

**48 hours after surgery (2 full days of ice), begin using WARM compresses.**

• For approximately 5-10 minutes every 3-4 hours. (Fill a sock with uncooked rice and microwave for 30-50 seconds, until comfortably hot, wrap sock in a damp cloth to create moist heat). **Continue warm compress every day until all swelling and tenderness is resolved (this can take a few weeks).** Alternately, you may use a store purchased microwavable gel pack if you choose. Either way, the heat should be moist.

**Sleep on your back with your head elevated above your heart for 2 days after surgery.**

- The surgical wounds are fragile for 2 weeks after surgery. Accidentally rubbing them during sleep is the most common way a wound will open after surgery.
- Keeping your head elevated will reduce swelling after surgery.
- The easiest way to do this is simply with an extra pillow. You may also choose to sleep in a recliner chair, if you have one.
- If you cannot do this because of back or breathing problems, that is ok, but you will notice more swelling in the morning.
- If your head rolls to the side when you sleep, you will notice that the side facing downward will have more swelling due to gravity.
- **Do not bend with your head below your heart, lift things heavier than a gallon of milk, or do anything strenuous for 1 week.**
- A sudden increase in blood pressure is the #1 reason to have substantial bleeding after surgery. While rare, bleeding behind the eye after surgery can cause permanent vision loss. Avoiding these activities will help prevent this complication.
- You may resume your regular activities including your regular exercise routine on Day 8 after

surgery.

**Avoid bathing in a tub 7 days. You may shower after 24 hours.**

- This is important for preventing infection.
- You may wash your hair in the shower if you can tip your head back and let the water run down the back of your head rather than down your face. Gently pat dry the area.



**Do not sleep with pets in the bed or on your lap for 1 week.**

- Make arrangements ahead of time for help if you have pets that require walking or care you are unable to provide.

**Avoid hot tubs, saunas, ocean/lake water and swimming pools for 2 weeks.**

- This is important to prevent infection. Soaking the wounds also weakens them in the first two weeks.

**Do not smoke for at least 14 days after surgery.**

- Smoking decreases blood flow to the wounds and delays healing. If your surgery included Mohs reconstruction, smoking can cause the reconstruction to completely fail.

**No driving for at least 48 hours after surgery. No driving if you are in pain, if your vision is blurry, or if you are taking narcotic pain medication.**

### **DIET**

**You may eat immediately after surgery. Start with a gentle diet.**

- Lingering effects of your anesthesia can lead to an upset stomach. Start with clear liquids. Notify us if you start having severe nausea or vomiting, which can cause re-bleeding with increased swelling and bruising.

**Avoid drinking alcohol for 1 week after surgery.**

- Alcohol will delay healing, increase swelling and bruising, and increase the risk of bleeding after surgery.

### **MEDICATIONS**

**Resume all oral medications after surgery unless instructed otherwise.**

**Resume your physician prescribed blood thinners 2 days after surgery.**

**Use the antibiotic ointment on your stitches or wounds 2 times per day and in your eyes at bedtime for 7-10 days (refer to your specific prescription).**

- This keeps the wounds moist to promote healing and prevents infection. The ointment will not hurt your eye if it gets in the eye (it is formulated for use in the eye), but it will make the vision blurry because it is greasy.
- Apply the ointment with a clean fingertip.
- Do not apply the ointment right before driving as it will blur the vision if it gets in your eye.
- It is important to stop the ointment as directed. Begin using small amount of **Vaseline** on your incisions 2 x day for 4-6 weeks or until you are satisfied with appearance.

- Using the antibiotic ointment longer than instructed can cause an increase in eye pressure and/or thinning of the skin.

**If you have pain, start by taking Extra Strength Tylenol (500mg) as instructed on the bottle. If you continue to experience pain, you may take the prescribed pain medication.**

- It is normal to have some pain after surgery. The pain should improve on a daily basis.

**Use artificial tear drops and Tears PM for dryness.**

- Dryness can present as burning and/or as a foreign body sensation.
- You may experience dryness for several weeks while your lids are healing.
- Recommended brands include Retaine, Systane, Gen Teal, Thera Tears and are all available in both daytime and nighttime options.

**PLEASE CALL DR. BEARDEN'S OFFICE IF YOU EXPERIENCE:**

Decrease in vision or double vision.

Uncontrolled bleeding that will not stop with gentle pressure.

Pain or nausea that is not controlled with medication.

Signs of infection including redness, pus-like discharge, warmth and pain.

Fever greater than 100F.

Any other concerns.

*Day time: 804.287.4276 (Monday-Thursday 8-5, Friday 8-4) After-hours: 804-257-5116  
(Nights, holidays and weekends)*

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*Patient Signature*

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*Date*