



POST-OPERATIVE CARE

SUBNASAL LIP LIFT

These are the specific instructions for your subnasal lip lift. Please read them together with your General Post-Operative Instructions, which apply after every surgery. If you have questions, call the office at (410) 266-7120.

Caring for the Incision & Daily Activity

- ◆ Keep your head elevated, including while sleeping, for the first week. Sleep on your back.
- ◆ Apply cool compresses gently to the upper lip and around the nose for the first 2–3 days. Do not press or rub the incision.
- ◆ A skin tape is usually placed across the incision and should stay on for about a week; it is not a problem if it comes off early. Wash around it, but do not let it get soaking wet. Tape may not be used if laser resurfacing is done at the same time.
- ◆ Once the tape is off, keep the incision clean and moist: dab it gently with a cotton swab and apply a thin layer of the ointment we provide two to three times a day.
- ◆ You may shower and gently wash your face on Day 2. Pat the area dry — do not scrub, and do not use a washcloth or facial cleansing brush on the upper lip.
- ◆ No straws, smoking, or vaping — all put tension on the healing lip, and nicotine seriously impairs healing.
- ◆ Brush gently, keeping the toothbrush away from the incision, and rinse after meals. Postpone dental cleanings and non-urgent dental work for six weeks, as the mouth is held open wide during treatment.
- ◆ Sutures are removed in the office 7 days after surgery. Do not trim or pull at them yourself.
- ◆ No makeup over the incision until we clear it.

You can expect:

- ◆ Swelling and bruising of the upper lip and nasal base, most pronounced in the first 3–5 days.
- ◆ A tight, stiff upper lip that makes smiling, speaking, and drinking feel awkward at first.
- ◆ Numbness or tingling of the lip and nostril base that improves gradually.
- ◆ The lip to look over-lifted at first; this settles over the first few weeks.
- ◆ A pink, slightly firm scar under the nose that softens and fades over several months.

Call the office if you experience:

- ◆ Separation or gapping of the incision, or a suture that comes loose early
- ◆ Increasing redness, warmth, drainage, or pain, or a fever
- ◆ Sudden swelling on one side, or bleeding that does not stop with gentle pressure

As time goes by and you are healing, the following guidelines apply:

- ◆ Begin sun protection once the incision has sealed and keep the scar out of direct sun for six months — sun exposure is the most common cause of a permanently dark scar.
- ◆ Once cleared, gentle scar massage and any scar treatment we recommend will help the incision soften and flatten.
- ◆ Numbness and tightness improve for several months; the final shape of the lip is apparent by three to six months.