

Care following facial feminisation procedures. Information for patients.
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General requirements

- During the day, you should rest sitting up in a chair, rather than lying down in bed to help reduce swelling.
- Ideally when sleeping at night you should have your head raised but it is important to be comfortable too so please don't feel you have to be very upright.
- Avoid bending your head down, bend your knees instead or get others to help with socks and shoes or wear slip on shoes.
- During the day, you should walk about a little but you should avoid vigorous exercise and heavy lifting for 6 weeks.
- Cold compresses can be used freely.
- **Please do not smoke or use any form of nicotine for at least 4 weeks after surgery.** The use of nicotine of any kind is likely to cause healing problems.
- Scars can be massaged with silicone gel 3 weeks after surgery. Please try not to expose your scar to the sun. During sun exposure in the first year after surgery, please use factor 30 sun protection.

Forehead surgery

- It is normal for the forehead and scalp to feel numb and very tight. Swelling usually increases for the first 3 days after surgery. Most of the swelling goes away after 3 weeks but it takes many months for all the swelling to settle. Bruising around the eyes is very common.
- **Bandage.** Your nurse will remove this around 24 hours after surgery.
- **Hair Washing.** You should wash your hair with a mild shampoo frequently after the bandage and drains have been removed. Rub the shampoo in towards the incision instead of away from it to avoid stretching it. Do not rub too much with a towel and pat the scalp dry instead. You can use a hairdryer on a cool setting. It is better to take showers than baths. Do not have a hair cut for 6 weeks.
- **Drains.** You will have 2 drains in the scalp to help prevent swelling. These will be removed after 1-2 nights.
- **Stitches.** If there is a hairline incision, there will be stitches at the hairline and metal clips in the hair. If the incision is behind the hairline, the skin will be closed with staples. There are also supporting dissolving stitches internally. Stitches/staples are removed after approximately 1 week by the nurse in the clinic.
- **Tightness.** The forehead will feel tight after surgery. This tight feeling can get worse when the nerves recover and sensation comes back but this is usually temporary.
- **Nose Blowing.** Please avoid blowing your nose for 2 weeks after surgery, If you have to sneeze it is best to open your mouth fully when you do, do not hold it in as the air will then be forced into your sinuses.

Open Rhinoplasty

- It is normal to experience discomfort, numbness and swelling. It is likely that there will be some bruising around the eyes. The eyes may water after surgery.
- **Congestion.** The nose will feel blocked certainly for a few weeks and sometimes a few months. The nose should not be blown for 6 weeks.
- **Glasses.** Glasses should not be worn for 6 weeks.

- **Splint.** You will have steristrips and a splint over the nose which should be kept dry. The splint is removed after 1 week.
- **Stitches.** Sutures inside the nose are resorbable. There will be non-resorbable stitches at the base of the nose which are removed after about 1 week. The area around the stitches should be gently cleaned with saline or water twice a day to prevent and remove crusting.

Cheek implants

- **Stitches.** Stitches are dissolvable.
- **Mouth care.** Brush your teeth twice a day with a toothbrush with a small head and normal toothpaste. You should rinse your mouth four times a day with chlorhexidine mouthwash for 1 week after surgery.
- **Diet.** You can eat a normal diet. Care should be taken with hot food and drinks as the upper lip is likely to be numb for a while.

Chin / Jaw / Angle reduction

- **Stitches.** Stitches are all resorbable. Please avoid pulling the lip down to look at the stitches as this can pull the wound apart.
- **Dressing.** Micropore paper tape is used to support your chin, to help prevent swelling and to support the muscles in the chin while they heal. Please peel this off after 3-5 days. Don't worry if you need to take the dressing off sooner.
- **Numbness.** It is normal for the lower lip and chin to be numb after surgery. This usually recovers after a few weeks but recovery can take up to 18 months. Permanent numbness is possible, but unlikely.
- **Swelling.** Swelling around the chin and under the chin at the top of the neck usually increases for 3 days before it starts to reduce. Most of the swelling goes away after 3 weeks but it takes many months for all the swelling to completely settle.
- **Mouth care.** Brush your teeth twice a day with a toothbrush with a small head and normal toothpaste. Brushing teeth is absolutely essential. You should rinse your mouth four times a day with chlorhexidine mouthwash for 1 week after surgery.
- **Diet.** Please stick to a soft diet for the first four weeks after surgery. Care should be taken with hot food and drinks as the lower lip is likely to be numb and could be injured without you feeling it.

Thyroid cartilage reduction

- **Stitches.** There are some deeper dissolvable stitches. The skin is closed with a single running stitch which needs to be removed approximately a week following surgery. The wound is covered with steristrips and a waterproof dressing.
- **Voice.** The voice can change after surgery, but this usually resolves with time.
- **Diet.** A softer diet that is easier to swallow is more comfortable in the first week.

Please get in touch if you have any questions at all after your surgery.