

## Face and Neck Lift

This operation aims to reverse some the ageing changes to the face and neck by tightening the underlying structures and removing any excess skin. A general anaesthetic is required and the operation takes about three hours. The procedure may be combined with eyelid operations or a brow lift.

The scars from the operation start in the hair of the sideburn in front of the ear, then run in front and behind the ear and finally into the hairline. When you wake up, there will be a drain in each side of the neck and sometimes a supportive head bandage. The drains are removed the next day and you can go home. Some patients end up staying for two days. Hair wash is quite important the first or second day after the operation and does no harm to the wounds. In some patients too much blood collects in the wound (a haematoma) particularly behind the ear. Usually, this blood is removed on the ward but sometimes it is necessary to have a second operation.

As it is a long procedure, do not be surprised to be tired and have lost your normal sleep patterns for one or two months after the operation. Bruising may take up to 3-4 weeks to resolve and there may be areas of poor healing that will require small dressings.

The wounds within the hairline are sometimes closed with staples as these are less painful to remove (although it sounds drastic). The staples are removed between ten and fourteen days following surgery. The remainder of the wounds are closed with normal sutures which are removed between seven and ten days following surgery. Beneath the skin there are lots of dissolvable and sometimes permanent sutures. Some of these may be felt through the skin several weeks or months after the operation.

In the first 2-3 months, some patients notice some lumpiness in the cheeks. This is due to collections of fluid that gradually disperse. I may advice massage to speed up this process. Also in the first 2-3 months, in most patients the scar become thick, particularly by the ear lobe. Usually, the scar softens on its own but sometimes the scar may need injection of steroid to help it soften. Furthermore, some people get hair loss around the scar, but this is temporary and does recover.

Wound complications are very common in people who smoke tobacco and so this operation cannot be done on smokers. I generally advise a period of at least three months of no smoking before surgery.

- **We would ask you not to take any herbal or over the counter medicines prior to having a surgical procedure. Many homeopathic chemists advocate arnica before surgery however this is quite harmful as it causes more bleeding during surgery.**
- **You will be given antibiotics during your surgery. Do remember that for women using an oral contraceptive, this will be less effective as a result of taking antibiotics, especially oral ones. You will need an alternative form of contraception whilst taking the antibiotics and for seven days afterwards.**

### **Surgery on Men**

The facelift operation can be done on men. However, there are three extra considerations as compared with surgery on women. Firstly, there may be more bruising and there is a higher chance of blood collection (a haematoma) under the skin after surgery. Secondly, since at the operation skin is removed from in front of the ear, this causes the hair bearing skin of the cheek to be pulled closer to the ear. Consequently, the sideburn hair is pulled against the ear and also it is necessary to shave closer to the ear. Finally, depending on the patters on hair loss, the scars behind the ear may be more noticeable on men due to baldness.

Loshan Kangesu. Consultant Plastic Surgeon  
© Lilac Associates Ltd, 2010  
[www.loshankangesu.co.uk](http://www.loshankangesu.co.uk)  
Tel: 01371 821179  
[enquires@kangesu.com](mailto:enquires@kangesu.com)