

## **Keys to a Successful Recovery after Facial Plastic Surgery**

If cosmetic surgery is a new experience, you may wonder whether taking time off to recover is really necessary or how much is involved. Do not assume that the success of your surgery is only up to your plastic surgeon. That assumption can be a mistake that prevents you from achieving optimum results. Planning is the key to preserving and enjoying the benefits of your facial plastic surgery procedure for years to come. The most important time to prepare is as soon as you have made the decision to undergo the procedure.

### **1. Get your skin in the best possible condition prior to surgery and protect yourself after the procedure.**

Your body is an amazing machine with the unique ability to heal itself, but it needs your help. From the moment you make the decision to have a procedure, start drinking plenty of water, eat well and get moderate amounts of exercise. Do not bask in the sun. After surgery especially, sun block is a must. Sun exposure will make your suture lines appear darker and thicker than the surrounding skin. Plan to purchase wrap-around sunglasses, a hat, and scarf and perhaps camouflage make-up to protect you from the sun and hide bruising during your recovery.

### **2. Have everything you need by your bedside.**

Ask your surgeon about the home recovery items that you will need to be comfortable before your surgery is scheduled. Most surgeons recommended elevating your head at least forty-five degrees during recovery. Inquire about cold compresses to reduce swelling and bruising specific to your surgery. Ask about homeopathic remedies such as Arnica or Bromelain to minimize inflammation and bruising.

Decide on your wardrobe prior to surgery. You won't want to pull anything over your head until you are completely healed. Plan to wear loose-fitting garments that zip or button.

Have your menu of soft comfort foods selected and prepared. If you are having skin resurfacing or lip augmentation, purchase a baby spoon or adult sip cup. Have all of your prescriptions filled and make a schedule for taking your pills. Drinking lots of water will help flush medications from your system, and will aide in digestion and prevention of constipation. A water bottle makes it easier to drink. During the healing process, good nutrition is a must. The post operative period is not the time to "lose a few pounds."

### **3. Plan on needing help.**

Don't count on your mate to stand at your bedside and cater to your every need. Even the most loving mate may get weak in the knees at the thought of changing a bandage. You may consider hiring a nurse or assistant during the first several days after surgery.

### **4. Relaxation is one of the most important parts of a comfortable recovery.**

De-stress your life. Plan to give yourself the gift of time by arranging for someone to do your yard work or feed your pets, etc. Bending, straining or heavy lifting is out of the question in the first few days after surgery. Don't risk raising your blood pressure. Focus on relaxing and feeling and looking your best. Remember, you have decided to make an important investment in yourself. Protect it by planning ahead and you will be richly rewarded for many years to come.