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BLEPHAROPLASTY POSTOPERATIVE CARE INSTRUCTIONS
PLEASE READ ME BEFORE AND AFTER SURGERY ☺

ABOUT JACKIE:

*My name is Jackie, and I am a board-certified and licensed physician associate (PA-C) working alongside Dr. Terry Dubrow. My job is to ensure that you heal optimally in the postoperative period. As Dr. Dubrow's "right-hand gal," I will work very closely with you during your postoperative and follow-up appointments developing diagnostic and therapeutic plans to ensure optimal recovery. You will be seeing me for **all** of your postoperative visits. Thank you for trusting me with your surgical and postsurgical care. These postoperative instructions will help guide your recovery process; *it is imperative that you and any of your caretakers carefully read these instructions before and after surgery.**

THINGS TO PURCHASE BEFORE SURGERY:

1. **Refresh® eye drops**—These will be used if you experience dry eyes.
2. **Stool softener** (Ducolax, Miralax, Metamucil, or Peri-Colace)—Pain medication can constipate you. Peri-Colace is my favorite as it helps soften the feces (“the mush”) and also helps stimulate the bowels (“the push”). These should be started the day after surgery.
3. **Arnika and Bromelin**: These are herbal supplements that aid in bruising and swelling. You can purchase these products at our office (\$30 for a 1-week supply), Whole Foods or Sprouts. You can begin these supplements up to one week before surgery and use them for 2 weeks after surgery.
4. **Compression stockings**: We will provide you with 1 pair of compression stockings immediately after surgery. Please plan to purchase an additional pair at Target ® in the event that your socks become soiled or are uncomfortable. They will need to be worn for 5 days postoperatively.
5. **Oral Thermometer**: It is important to monitor your temperature after surgery in the event that you feel “feverish” or hot. You have a fever if you have a temperature above 101.5.
6. **Cold compresses and warm compresses**: These will be used on your eyelids to control swelling in the postoperative period.
7. **Rapid Recovery and Healing Protocol, IV Therapy with Dr. Todd Newman**: Consider this therapy in our office before and/or after surgery to improve wound healing, decrease recovery time, decrease scarring, improve sense of well-being and reduce pain and discomfort during your post-surgical course. You can find additional information about this in the “Rapid Recovery and Healing Protocol, IV Therapy” section of the post-operative instructions and also in the separate handout provided to you in your preoperative care folder provided to you during your preoperative appointment.
8. **Read the “Preparing for Surgery” document enclosed in your preoperative folder.**

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- After surgery, have an **adult** available to stay with you for the first 24 – 48 hours, as you will be weak and drowsy.
- You can expect some bleeding from the stitch lines and swelling of the eyelids. However, you should call the office if you have a continuous bloody drip, significantly more swelling on one side than the other, or any severe eye pain.
- Smiling, yawning, or pulling on the eyelids should be avoided for 1 week after surgery. This is especially important the first few days following removal of the stitches.
- If your eyes feel dry, use Refresh® Plus drops (available over the counter) in both eyes every 1 – 2 hours.
- All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun is to be avoided.

WALKING:

- It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent postoperative problems. It is good to walk for 15 – 20 minutes 6 times per day or get up every hour to walk to the restroom and back. This encourages blood flow throughout your legs to reduce the chance of blood clot development.
- **IF YOU HAVE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, LEG SWELLING, AND/OR LEG PAIN AT ANY POINT IN YOUR POSTOPERATIVE HEALING, GO TO AN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY (OR CALL 911) AS THIS COULD SIGNIFY A BLOOD CLOT.**

COMPRESSION STOCKINGS/TRAVELING/PRECISION DVT PREVENTION DEVICE:

- **Compression Stockings:**
 - If compression stockings were provided, please leave the stockings on for 5 days after surgery. They may be removed when showering but must be replaced after your shower. You can also purchase additional compression socks at Target® if needed if the ones provided in surgery are too large or too small or become soiled.
- **Precision DVT Prevention Device:**
 - If it is determined that you are a high-risk patient for developing a blood clot, (a DVT), you will be provided with a DVT prevention device to be used on your legs in the postoperative period.
 - You will need to wear your device anytime you are not ambulating for the first 30 days after surgery.
 - The device will stay charged for up to 8 - 10 hours. The device will charge in 2 hours.
 - The device is yours to keep and can be worn in the future for DVT prophylaxis when traveling long distances.
 - Please plan to bring your device to your first 3 postoperative visits so that we can document the amount of time the device has been worn (to ensure compliance).
- **Traveling:**
 - If you are an out-of-town patient and will be traveling back home after your surgery, please wear your compression stockings and DVT prevention device on the plane and remove them after landing.
 - If you do not have the DVT prevention device, please only wear the compression stockings and when on the airplane, please be sure to get up every hour to walk around and encourage blood-flow in your legs. Also, be sure to wiggle your ankles when sitting as if pressing a gas pedal to promote blood flow.
 - It is safe to fly 3 days after surgery if you have been cleared by Jackie to do so.
 - If you experience shortness of breath after a flight or leg pain with extreme leg swelling, please visit an Emergency Department immediately to rule out a blood clot.



PAIN AND PAIN MEDICATION:

- Take pain medication with food. You will be given an anti-anxiety/muscle relaxant medication (Valium) that you may take as well to prevent aggravation of the pain cycle. When taking Valium, take it 1 – 2 hours after the pain medication.
- Percocet (Oxycodone + Acetaminophen) or Vicodin (Hydrocodone + Acetaminophen) should be taken as directed:
 - **Mild to moderate pain:** 1 tablet every 4 – 6 hours as needed
 - **Severe pain:** 2 tablets every 4 – 6 hours as needed
- If your pain is mild, or if you do not like the effects of the narcotics, you can take Tylenol® (Acetaminophen) 1000mg every 8 hours (which would be 2 tablets of the Extra Strength Tylenol®, purchased over the counter). Please do not exceed 3000mg in a 24-hour period.
- We will provide every patient with **1 refill** of the pain medication and the Valium if needed **one week after the last prescription was filled**. No additional refills will be provided.
 - If you require additional pain medication, please reach out to your primary care provider for pain management or visit an urgent care as we will not provide additional refills after the 1 allotted refill.
- We cannot call-in/fax/email/mail a refill for pain medication to a pharmacy. If you are an out-of-town patient, visit your local provider, urgent care, or ER for pain management.
- Take a stool softener with pain medication to prevent constipation.
- **DO NOT DRIVE WHILE TAKING PAIN MEDICATION** or Valium. These medications can result in drowsiness. If you are pulled-over while driving under the influence of narcotics or scheduled substances, you will get a DUI!
- **DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL WHILE TAKING PAIN MEDICATIONS** or Valium. This can be a deadly combination.
- Only take the pain medication if needed. The quicker you can wean off of the pain medication, the better you will feel and heal.

DO NOT SMOKE. This is very important!!!

- Smoking (tobacco, marijuana, or vapes) can result in a lack of blood supply to tissues and fat causing tissue death or delayed wound healing. Even 0% nicotine vapes contain a trace amount of nicotine that the FDA accepts as 0%.
- Smoking can resume 6 weeks after surgery as long as no challenges in healing are present.

SUPPLEMENTS:

- Do not take aspirin (or products containing aspirin) or Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Midol®) for 3 weeks after surgery. Also do not begin herbal supplements until 3 weeks after surgery.
 - Arnika, Bromelin and Vitamin C are okay to take.
- Phentermine or appetite suppressants should not be taken until 6 weeks after surgery as these supplements increase heart rate and blood pressure and can interfere with your recovery.

REMEMBER THE FIVE W'S:

- *The most common cause of an **elevated temperature/fever** after surgery is due to collapse of the lungs (atelectasis). This is a normal occurrence as a result of anesthesia and the physical stress your body is undergoing. In order to decrease your body temperature and expand the lungs, it is important to do the following:*
 - **Wind:** Take 10 deep breaths per hour for the first 72 hours.
 - **Water:** Dehydration can also cause an increase in body temperature. It is important that you remain hydrated since surgery can deplete your body of water. 64 ounces of water a day is encouraged.
 - **Walk:** Get up and walk once every hour to keep your blood moving. This is key for preventing a blood clot.
 - **Wonder drugs:** Take your pain medication or Tylenol® as needed. An increase in pain can cause an increase in body temperature.
 - **Wound:** Observe the wound for redness, heat, discharge (pus), and openings.

SLEEPING POSITION:

- After surgery it is best for you to keep your head elevated on a wedge headrest at a 45° angle when in bed for one week. You should also sleep in this position to minimize swelling to your eyes.

COLD/HOT COMPRESSES:

- Use cold wet compresses on eyelids for at least the first 48 hours after surgery to reduce the amount of swelling you will have (make sure you keep these compresses cold and wet, and change them every 15-20 minutes). You can also make an “ice burrito” by wrapping a handful of crushed ice in a clean washcloth or small towel and then hold this wet cloth against the operated area gently.
- After the third day, switch to hot compresses. Soak a washcloth in hot water. The water should be warm as tolerated (but not enough to burn the skin). Gently place this warm cloth against your eyes for 15 minutes 4 – 6 times per day.

SHOWERING AND BEAUTY:

- After the 2nd day after surgery, you can begin washing your face (but not your eyelids) gently with a mild soap and rinse with water. It will not hurt to get water on the stitches or in the eyes.
- You can shower 3 days after surgery. Please leave the steri-strips on your eyelid incisions in place. Once out of the shower, you can blow dry your incisions on cool.
 - If the Steri Strips fall off, there is no need to replace them.
- Contacts can be worn when the eyes start feeling normal and the majority of the swelling has subsided. This is approximately 2 weeks after surgery. Wear glasses until then. It is common to have blurred vision after your procedure as the cornea can swell – it can take a few weeks to resolve – be patient, it will go away.
- Cosmetics can be worn on the face as early as 5 days after surgery. However, eyelid or eyelash cosmetics should NOT be worn until after the eyelid sutures have been removed.

SUTURES:

- We use Prolene sutures which are made of a non-absorbable material. Sutures will be removed 7 days after surgery depending on your healing progression.
 - If you are an out-of-town patient, please plan to either stay until your 1-week visit, return to our office at your 1-week visit, or have a provider in your hometown remove the sutures.
 - Keep in mind that providers in your hometown may refuse to remove your sutures. It is imperative that you call your local provider in advance to ensure that they are comfortable with removing your sutures prior to you leaving us. We do not and will not provide referrals for postoperative care for out-of-town patients. Patients are responsible for coordinating their own postoperative care should they choose to have their sutures removed elsewhere.
- Do not apply anything on your incisions for 3 weeks unless Jackie asks you to do so. Keep the incisions clean and dry.
- 3 – 4 weeks after all sutures have been removed (or when all of your scabs have fallen off), you can begin scar treatment:
- All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact or tanning booths are

to be avoided for 6 months. Use a sunscreen with SPF of 15 with UVA and UVB protection for at least 6 months.

SCAR THERAPY:

- We use **Silagen® Scar Refinement System** (<http://www.silagen.com>) at our office (you can purchase this at our office). Silagen® silicone gels are made with the highest quality medical grade silicones that create a protective barrier over scars which increase hydration and help stop excessive collagen buildup. This will help flatten and soften scars and reduce redness, itching, and pain.
- You may begin using Silagen® as soon as the skin is fully closed, after all sutures are removed and after all scabs have fallen off. This usually occurs anywhere between 3 – 6 weeks from surgery.
- How to use:
 - We recommend you use at least 2 months of Silagen® gel which is massaged on to the incision twice daily for 2 - 4 months.



EXERCISE AND SEXUAL ACTIVITY:

- No overheating for the first 3 weeks (spas, exercising in the sun, etc).
- Cardio may resume at 3 weeks following surgery.
- You may begin swimming 4 weeks post-operatively if healing is complete.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Tearing and dry eyes often occur after eyelid surgery. This will stop as the swelling subsides over the first several days.
- Tightness of the eyelids is a normal feeling after surgery and may make it hard to close the eyelids completely. There may also be a feeling of numbness of the eyelids. Both sensations will subside with time.
- Red discoloration and swelling of the whites of the eyes is normal as well. This is painless, will not harm your vision, and will disappear completely. Swelling may also cause the lower lid to pull away from the eye. This will subside as the swelling goes down.
- You will experience swelling after the surgery. Swelling is the accumulation of fluid which is the body's way of healing. The swelling will probably be at its worst on the 2nd or 3rd day after surgery. The swelling will gradually improve over subsequent weeks. Some residual swelling can last as long as 1 – 2 months.
- You should expect some slight oozing of the blood from the incision site over the first 2 days. This is normal during the healing process.
- Bruising around the eyes may last 1 – 2 weeks.
- It takes **6 MONTHS FOR FINAL RESULTS** to appear. In the interim, you may notice incision asymmetry and swelling that changes from day-to-day. Be patient please and try not to focus on these issues before the 6-month period.
- A burning sensation (raw, sensitive) or sharp shooting pains along the incision line is normal and indicative of nerve regeneration. These "neuralgias" will burn out by 9 months.
- Numbness is expected to resolve by 9 months on average.

EMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOLLOWING SURGERY:

- It is not unusual for patients to undergo significant emotional "ups and downs" after any type of surgery. Factors such as underlying stress, medications, and/or psychological tendencies can result in patients experiencing a "post operative depression" that generally resolves after a few weeks. Having a partner, family member, or friend who is supportive can help with this process. Understanding the stages of emotional "ups and downs" can help patients stay calm and recover from this emotional process faster:
 - **Phase 1: Being Out of It**
 - Swelling and discomfort is most severe over the first few days after surgery. Pain medications also can make you disoriented and emotional.
 - **Phase 2: Mood Swings**
 - Having just had surgery, patients are adjusting to a sudden change in their appearance with much anticipation. The presence of bruising, swelling, and asymmetries will distort a patient's results thereby concealing the final outcome. Mood swings (especially sadness), worry and depression are common emotions as a result. Patients may even ask, "What have I done?" or think that "I never should have done it."

- **Phase 3: Being over critical**
 - During the second week, patients will probably be feeling a lot better. The swelling and muscle cramping/spasms will be decreasing and sutures will be out. Because of anticipation, it is natural for patients to look critically at their new body worrying about symmetry, scars, and so on. At this point, it's normal to wonder if they have achieved their goal and what they paid for. This is too soon to tell and most concerns are resolved with time.
- **Phase 4: Happy at last**
 - Finally, about **3 – 6 months out of surgery**, patients will probably start liking how they look and are feeling much better. They may be in the mood to check out some bathing suits or outfits to show off their new figure.

RAPID RECOVERY AND HEALING PROTOCOL, IV THERAPY PACKAGE:

- There are numerous benefits to receiving the Rapid Recovery and Healing Protocol, IV therapy package. Those benefits include, but are not limited to, improved wound healing, decreased recovery time, decreased scarring, improved sense of well-being and reduced pain and discomfort during your post-surgical course.
- Our single (pre-operative) IV package is typically given one to two days before your surgery. This easy to administer, 30 to 40-minute, infusion can be given at our Newport Beach office or in the comfort of your hotel room. A powerful mixture of fluids, vitamins, minerals and cofactors (glutathione), it is designed to optimize your nutritional status prior to surgery. Our infusions will give you everything you need to prepare your body for the stress of surgery, maximize your ability to heal and help you feel energized.
- Additional therapy sessions are undertaken on the first three days after surgery and beyond, as needed. During those days we will deliver additional fluids, vitamins, muscle relaxants, anti-nausea agents and non-narcotic pain relievers under the care of our M.D. wellness physician, Dr. Newman.
- Additional options to improve your surgical experience include pre-operative nutritional guidance as well as 4, 8 and 12-week post-operative nutrition and supplement programs. Finally, we can deliver delicious custom designed meals, snacks and beverages, to your home or hotel. These packages are not only delicious, but help to reduce inflammation, curb sugar craving, support healthy intestinal flora, and form a framework for a healthy eating habits long beyond your time in our care.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS:

- It is important to be seen by Jackie at your post-op checks.
- Jackie will see you at the following follow-up appointments:

| Day 1 | Week 1 | Week 3 | Week 6 |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment for infection of surgical site • Suture removal • Discussion of scar therapy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of infection of surgical site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment for keloids and management with steroid injections if warranted |
| Month 3 | Month 6 | Month 12 | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First conversation regarding aesthetic results/concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second conversation regarding aesthetic results/concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final conversation regarding aesthetic results/concerns | |

- It's important to keep in mind that these appointments are patient-specific and may vary depending on your own individual healing and/or complications.
- If you are from out-of-town and cannot see Jackie at the recommended frequency, then it is strongly advised that you establish a relationship with a provider in your hometown who can follow your progress or evaluate you in case of infection, wound separation, or seroma.
- **Jackie and Dr. Dubrow cannot evaluate you or treat you over the phone, via email, or from a distance. If you have a cosmetic or functional complication, please plan to visit our office for a postoperative visit or seek care from your local provider or local plastic surgeon. We cannot provide referrals and cannot manage complications from a distance.**
- Call to schedule your appointments at (949) 515-4111 between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday – Thursday and between 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM on Fridays. The office closed on Saturday and Sunday.
- **The office is closed on Saturday and Sunday. Should you experience a complication over the weekend, you will need to be seen by an urgent care and/or Emergency Room.**

PLEASE EMAIL JACKIE (PA-C) AT JACQUELINE@DRDUBROW.COM IF:

- You have general questions regarding your postoperative care or aesthetic concerns. Keep in mind that Jackie is seeing

patients throughout the day and may not respond immediately. She checks her email at 9 am and at 5 pm and will respond accordingly.

- Keep in mind that a discussion of aesthetic concerns requires a physical postoperative visit. If you need to schedule an appointment, please call the office at 949-515-4111.
- Do not email Jackie to schedule appointments as she does not have access to the schedule.
- ***Please include your name, surgery, date of surgery, and question in Email!!!***

PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE AT 949-515-4111 IF:

- You have redness, increased pain at surgical incision sites, sudden increase in swelling, warmth, drainage (pus), vision loss, or oral temperature greater than 101.5°F
- You have nausea and vomiting despite Zofran use, rash, shortness of breath, leg pain with swelling, or diarrhea after taking your medication

PLEASE VISIT AN EMERGENCY ROOM OR CALL 911 IF:

- **At any point you experience shortness of breath or leg pain with swelling as this could indicate a pulmonary embolism (blood clot in lung) or dvt (blood clot in legs) and could be deadly if untreated.**

PLEASE VISIT AN URGENT CARE ON THE WEEKENDS OR WHEN THE OFFICE IS CLOSED IF:

- You have redness, sudden increase in swelling, warmth, drainage (pus), or oral temperature greater than 101.5°F

Any questions in regards to scheduling, rescheduling, preoperative concerns, or confirming appointments should be communicated with the office staff (not Jackie) at 949-515-4111. If it is the weekend and you have scheduling questions, please contact your surgical coordinator (Maryam or Kim) with those questions.