

Kaiser Permanente Cosmetic Services

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INFORMED CONSENT - FACELIFT SURGERY (Rhytidectomy)

INSTRUCTIONS

This is an informed-consent document that has been prepared to help your surgeon inform you concerning face lift surgery, its risks, and alternative treatment.

It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please initial each page, indicating that you have read the page and sign the consent for surgery as proposed by surgeon.

INTRODUCTION

Facelift, or rhytidectomy, is a surgical procedure to improve visible signs of aging on the face and neck. As individuals age, the skin and muscles of the face region begin to lose tone. The facelift cannot stop the process of aging. It can improve the most visible signs of aging by tightening deeper structures, re-draping the skin of face and neck, and removing selected areas of fat. A facelift can be performed alone, or in conjunction with other procedures, such as a browlift, liposuction, eyelid surgery, or nasal surgery.

Facelift surgery is individualized for each patient. The best candidates for facelift surgery have a face and neckline which has begun to sag, but whose skin has elasticity and whose bony structure is well defined.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

Alternative forms of management consist of not treating the laxness in the face and neck region with a facelift (rhytidectomy). Improvement of skin laxity, skin wrinkles and fatty deposits may be attempted by other treatments or surgery such as resurfacing the skin, chemical face peels or liposuction. Risks and potential complications are associated with alternative forms of treatment.

RISKS of FACELIFT (Rhytidectomy) SURGERY

Every surgical procedure involves a certain amount of risk and it is important that you understand the risks involved with facelift (rhytidectomy). An individual's choice to undergo a surgical procedure is based on the comparison of the risk to potential benefit. Although the majority of patients do not experience the following complications, you should discuss each of them with your surgeon to make sure you understand the risks, potential complications, and consequences of facelift (rhytidectomy).

Bleeding – It is possible, though unusual, that you may have a problem with bleeding during or after surgery. Should post-operative bleeding occur, it may require emergency treatment to drain accumulated blood (hematoma) or require a blood transfusion. Do not take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for at least two weeks before surgery, as this contributes to a greater risk of bleeding. Non-prescription “herbs” and dietary supplements can increase the risk of surgical bleeding or anaesthesia complications and should also be avoided for at least two weeks prior to your surgery date. Hypertension (high blood pressure) that is not under good medical control may cause bleeding during or after surgery. Accumulations of blood under the skin may delay healing and cause scarring.

Infection – Infection is unusual after this surgery. Should an infection occur, additional treatment including antibiotics or surgery may be necessary.

Informed Consent Facelift Surgery (Rhytidectomy), continued

Scarring – Although good wound healing after a surgical procedure is expected, abnormal scars may occur within the skin and deeper tissues. Scars may be unattractive and of different color than the surrounding skin. There is the possibility of visible marks from sutures. Additional treatments may be needed to treat scarring.

Damage to deeper structures – Deeper structures such as blood vessels, muscles, and particularly nerves may be damaged during the course of surgery. The potential for this to occur varies with the type of facelift procedure performed. Injury to deeper structures may be temporary or permanent.

Asymmetry – The human face is normally asymmetrical. There can be a variation from one side to the other in the results obtained from a facelift procedure.

Surgical Anesthesia – Both local and general anesthesia involve risk. There is the possibility of complications, injury, and even death from all forms of surgical anesthesia or sedation.

Nerve Injury – Motor and sensory nerves may be injured during a facelift operation. Weakness or loss of facial movements may occur after facelift surgery. Nerve injuries may cause temporary or permanent loss of facial movements and feeling. Such injuries may improve over time. Injury to sensory nerves of the face, neck and ear regions may cause temporary or more rarely permanent numbness. Painful nerve scarring is very rare.

Chronic pain – Chronic pain is a very rare complication after a facelift.

Skin disorders/skin cancer – A facelift is a surgical procedure for the tightening of skin and deeper structures of the face. Skin disorders and skin cancer may occur independently of a facelift.

Unsatisfactory result – There is the possibility of a poor result from the facelift surgery. This would include risks such as unacceptable visible deformities, loss of facial movement, wound disruption, and loss of sensation. You may be disappointed with the results of surgery. Infrequently, it is necessary to perform additional surgery to improve your results.

Allergic reactions – In rare cases, local allergies to tape, suture material, or topical preparations have been reported. Systemic reactions, which are more serious, may occur to drugs used during surgery and prescription medicines. Allergic reactions may require additional treatment.

Hair loss – Hair loss may occur in areas of the face where the skin was elevated during surgery. The occurrence of this is not predictable.

Delayed healing – Wound disruption or delayed wound healing is possible. Some areas of the face may not heal normally or may take a long time to heal. Areas of the skin may die. Frequent dressing changes or further surgery may be required to remove the non-healed tissue.

Smokers have a greater risk of skin loss and wound healing complications.

Long term effects – Subsequent alterations in facial appearance may occur as the result of aging, weight loss or gain, sun exposure, or other circumstances not related to facelift surgery. Facelift surgery does not arrest the aging process or produce permanent tightening of the face and neck. Future surgery or other treatments may be necessary to maintain the results of a facelift operation.

ADDITIONAL SURGERY NECESSARY

There are many variable conditions in addition to risk and potential surgical complications that may influence the long term result from facelift surgery. Even though risks and complications occur infrequently, the risks cited are the ones that are particularly associated with facelift surgery. Other complications and risks can occur but are even more uncommon. Should complications occur, additional surgery or other treatments may be necessary. The practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science. Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The cost of surgery involves several charges for the services provided. The total includes fees charged for the procedure, the cost of surgical supplies, anesthesia, laboratory tests, medications covered by your health plan, and outpatient surgery center charges. You will be responsible for necessary co-payments, deductibles, and charges not covered by your health plan. Additional costs may occur should complications develop from the surgery. If the complication is felt to be a health risk, for example an infection or hematoma, treatments required including hospitalization, anaesthesia and/or secondary surgery would be covered under your health plan coverage. In the event of a cosmetic complication requiring additional surgery, anaesthesia fees or hospital day-surgery charges involved with revision cosmetic surgery would also be your responsibility.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Services described here are provided on a fee-for-service basis, separate from and not covered under your Health Plan benefits. Clinical services are provided by providers or contractors of the Permanente Medical Groups. The Permanente Medical Groups, Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc., and Kaiser Foundation Hospitals have a financial interest in the provision of these services. For specific information about your Health Plan benefits please see your *Evidence of Coverage*.

DISCLAIMER

Informed-consent documents are used to communicate information about the proposed surgical treatment of a disease or condition along with disclosure of risks and alternative forms of treatment(s). The informed-consent process attempts to define principles of risk disclosure that should generally meet the needs of most patients in most circumstances.

However, informed consent documents should not be considered all inclusive in defining other methods of care and risks encountered. Your surgeon may provide you with additional or different information which is based on all the facts in your particular case and the state of medical knowledge.

Informed-consent documents are not intended to define or serve as the standard of medical care. Standards of medical care are determined on the basis of all of the facts involved in an individual case and are subject to change as scientific knowledge and technology advance and as practice pattern evolve.

It is important that you read the above information carefully and have all of your questions answered before signing the consent on the next page.

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