

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - FACELIFT SURGERY

1. What is Face lift or Rhytidectomy?

The Rhytidoplasty or "face lift" (or even still, Rhytidectomy) is a cosmetic surgery procedure designed to improve the signs of the aging, tightening the muscles beneath the skin of the neck, tightening the sagging skin itself, removing excess fat and overall improving the appearance; thus rejuvenating the face to its former youthful appearance. Post-operative patients agree that a Rhytidoplasty seems to easily take 10 years off of their appearance.

2. Are you a candidate for Face Lift?

Following are generally good tips to know if you may benefit from face-lift surgery.

- Do you look 'tired' when you are actually not.
- Do you feel that your skin is sagging around your jowls, forehead or mouth.
- Do you look older than you are
- Sagging of eye-brows, forehead can be isolated areas or as a part of generalized skin laxity of your facial skin

3. When is the right age for Face Lift?

There is no "usual age" that a patient requests a face lift. Patients requesting face lift belong to a wide age group range of 30's to 80's. For younger patients, a smaller procedure such as brow lift may all that may be needed. It is quite effective for horizontal lines on the forehead and for sagging or "hooded" eyebrows. Brow lifts are often requested in the late 20's-early 30's category and up.

Those who have significant sagginess of their facial skin and muscles, face lift is the procedure of choice. Face lift procedure can also combined with neck lift and liposuction of certain areas, brow lifts and blepharoplasties to address all areas of the

face showing signs of aging. An entire lifting of the facial skin and/or muscles can produce a more youthful appearance. Dr Dilip Gahankari will be able to address all your concerns about aging skin and would be able to discuss available options with you.

4. What happens at consultation?

Let me start off by saying that face lift like all cosmetic surgery procedures is about achieving YOUR goals.

- Document your goals as objectively as possible. Your own photograph of younger age is a good way to help you for the task.
- Do I want to look like myself of younger age or a bit different to how I was when young is a good question to ask your self.

When you meet with Dr Dilip Gahankari, please bring your note pad with your goals and your photograph of younger age if possible. He will note your goals, assess your face and neck and discuss the options that are available to you to achieve YOUR GOALS.

5. How is Face Lift performed?

Dr Gahankari prefers to perform the face-lift operation under a light General Anaesthetic if it is acceptable to you and the Anaesthesiologist. It can be performed under a light sleep anaesthetic. Some medications are also given to induce a profound state of relaxation. Much of the time patients have very little memory of the operation itself. After this state is achieved then medicines are given to make the surgical area numb and relatively bloodless.

This procedure takes about 4-6 hours to perform. It may take longer if you choose to have a neck lift as well. Depending upon your facial structure the incisions will be placed as

inconspicuously as possible above the hairline. Dr Gahankari will discuss the possible extent and placement of incisions with you before hand although occasionally shorter, longer or slightly different incisions may need to be used while trimming the excess skin. The incisions usually begin above the hairline, at the temples, continuing in a natural line in front of the ear. The incision normally further extends behind the earlobe and lower region of the scalp.

The skin is separated from the fat and muscle below it. If the neck lift or liposuction is being performed with the face lift, a small incision is placed inconspicuously underneath the chin to remove the excess fat. The underlying muscle and fascia are tightened and the skin itself is pulled back, trimmed and sutured into place. Sometimes surgical staples may be used within the scalp. The surgeon may place a small drain tube behind your ears for excess fluid and blood drainage.

6. What are the different techniques in performing a Face Lift?

Older-style or standard "skin-only" face lifts don't seem to last as long nor improve the appearance as much as a deep plane or 2 layer lift as they merely address only the skin laxity. The "deeper" lifts involve tightening of the SMAS (sub-muscular aponeurotic system - the facial muscles) which tightens the jowls, cheeks and the face in general making it more durable face-lift. Techniques of short scar face lift include MACS (Minimal Access Craniofacial Suspension) lift and 'S' lift. In these techniques the scar is avoided behind the ear. These are more suitable to the younger age group with less marked neck and face skin laxity. The advantage of short scar techniques is less down time and less morbidity. Dr Dilip Gahankari is familiar with all the modern techniques of the face lift and will be happy to advice you the most appropriate technique suited to your desire and expectations.

7. What should you expect during the post-operative recovery?

Although, there is normally no extensive pain related to the facelift operation, pain medication is prescribed before hand. You

may feel a degree of numbness that will normally disappear within 1-3 months.

It is natural to be concerned with the presence of bruising and swelling. This is very normal and secondary to the stretching and cutting of the tissues deep to the skin. The swelling will begin to disappear within the first couple of weeks. Many patients return to work with the help of camouflaging cosmetics at about two weeks post-op.

Things to be alarmed about:

- Temperature elevation greater than 101 F degrees
- Sudden swelling or sudden discoloration of skin
- Hemorrhage
- Increasing redness and tenderness of the wound edges indicating infection
- Allergic reaction to drugs

8. When do the sutures come out?

The drain tube, if used, will be removed in approximately 2-3 days. The bandages may be left on until about day 5. The facial swelling usually is worse between day three and five. The stitches may be removed the same day as your bandages; if surgical staples were used within the scalp area, they may be removed in 7-10 days.

9. What kind of scars should you expect?

Some scarring is inevitable. Most of the scarring is usually hidden in the hairline, behind the ears or under the jaw line. The surgery and the extent of the scars also depend on your individual needs. Dr Gahankari will discuss the technique that he would use with you before the surgery. Generally speaking, Endoscopic procedures involve smaller scars hidden in inconspicuous areas.

10. How long should you expect to be out of work?

You can expect to resume regular activities in about 2-3 weeks. It really is individual. There is often bruising and sometimes Dr Gahankari may advise a pressure garment as a support to

be worn at night to alleviate tissue stress and to accelerate reduction of the swelling. It is probably a good idea not to plan a function in which you would be noticeable in high profile for about six weeks.

11. When will you be able to see the results?

You will notice the tightening in your facial skin and muscle structure as soon as your swelling subsides. This may take one to three months. Face lift is meant to be an improvement in your facial profile and a relaxed and rejuvenated look to your face. It is not designed to make you look twenty, if you had it done at the age of sixty because that is un-natural and 'surgical'.

12. What are the risks of Face Lift?

In the early post-operative phase the risks are haematoma (blood clots), numbness from nerve damage, infection and rarely necrosis of the facial tissues and or skin. Facial muscles weakness if occurs is most often temporary. Very rarely this weakness may be permanent. In longer term there is a chance of scarring and hyper-pigmentation (permanent discolorations) caused by the bruising. There may be asymmetry and/or undesired results resulting from a face lift. Occasionally you may need some touch up surgery. Dr Gahankari will also brief you on the possible specific additional risks in your case.

13. Will you need another face lift later?

It is difficult to predict as the effect of aging is different in different individuals. It is however generally agreed that normally a face lift can last about 10 years. This procedure can not stop you from aging but can reduce the appearance of your general facial sagginess. Patients have shown up to a 7-12 year waiting period before choosing to undergo additional rejuvenation procedures.

14. Is there some thing I could do to improve my results?

Dr Gahankari will discuss how to prepare for your operation. In general following measures can be helpful.

- Giving up smoking at least 2-3 weeks before surgery as smoking increases the risk of infection and slows the healing of wounds, as well as increasing the risk of blood clots in the legs. It also increases the risk of skin and tissue slough.
- Stop taking medicines such as aspirin and anti-inflammatory medicines two weeks before surgery as they increase the risk of excessive bleeding.
- After the surgery keep your head up and wear the pressure garment. This will help reduce the facial swelling quicker.