



FACIAL AND COSMETIC  
SURGERY CENTER

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MASSACHUSETTS EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY

## **Facial Nerve Exploration:**

### **After Surgery:**

- Apply ice packs to the area as much as possible for the first 3 days. After day 3, ice should be applied for 20-40 minutes four times a day, for four more days.
- Take care to **sleep propped up** on either 3-4 pillows, or on a recliner for the first 7 days, as this will help with swelling.
- Your sutures are dissolvable, so there will be nothing that needs to be taken out. The sutures usually start dissolving around day 10 after surgery, and fully dissolve by day 21.
- You may shower and wash your hair and face the day after your procedure, taking care to gently pat the sutures dry afterwards.
- Apply either Aquaphor or bacitracin to the incision line twice per day for the first 10 days after the procedure. After that, you do not need to apply anything.
- **Do not perform any strenuous exercise for the first 10 days after the procedure.** Walking is permitted.
- You may resume taking Aspirin/NSAIDs after 7 days if you have had no bleeding or other problems.
- **Refrain from getting any makeup or facial products on the incision line**, for a full 3 weeks after the procedure.

### **What to expect:**

#### *Swelling*

Swelling will peak around postop day three, before gradually beginning to improve. A majority of the swelling will disappear after the first 10-14 days, but it will take a full 12 weeks for the edema to completely resolve. Your swelling will be worse in the morning right when you wake up due to gravity and will gradually improve over the course of the day.

#### *Discoloration*

Bruising will vary, much like swelling, from patient-to-patient, but most patients experience bruising on and around the area of surgery. This bruising and discoloration should resolve after about three weeks. You can apply some Arnica gel to the bruising under the eye/cheek area beginning three days after surgery, and you can cover up any of the bruising under the eyes with concealer makeup beginning on day 3 as long as you take care to avoid the suture lines.

### **When should I call my doctor?**

- Fever greater than 101 F
- Nausea and vomiting that lasts beyond the first day
- Large amounts of bleeding (soaking through more than 6 gauze pads in an hour)
- Sudden severe or increasing pain

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