

Isolated Neck Lift

Patient Information

Background

As part of the ageing process, skin progressively loses its elasticity, and the muscles beneath may begin to slacken. The stresses of daily life, the effects of gravity and exposure to the sun can cause the skin of the neck to become loose and sag. The rate at which this happens varies from one person to another and is determined in part by our genes. Ageing of the skin of the neck does not necessarily reflect the rate that the rest of our body and mind is ageing, and many people feel that frustrated that the neck they see in the mirror is not the one that they feel should be there. Substantial weight loss can also produce similar changes. A neck lift can restore a firmer, smoother and more defined neck and jawline, creating a more youthful appearance that better reflects how you feel.

What is a Neck Lift

A neck lift is a surgical procedure that aims to tighten and lift the loose skin and underlying tissue of the neck. It can address sagging skin, visible muscle bands and excess fat beneath the chin. The procedure can be performed on its own (isolated neck lift) or in combination with other procedures such as a facelift or chin liposuction, depending on individual needs.

What are the expected results of the surgery

A neck lift gives the best results if your neck has started to sag but your skin still has some elasticity and good tone. Most people who undergo neck lift surgery are in their 40s to 70s, though it can be performed successfully at other ages. It should not be obvious that you have had surgery, but you should look refreshed and more youthful.

How Is the Procedure Carried Out

Ablative laser resurfacing is carried out in a dedicated treatment room by a trained professional. The skin is first cleansed thoroughly, and a topical anesthetic cream is usually applied to minimise any discomfort. Once the skin is prepared, a handheld laser device is used to deliver controlled beams of light energy across the treatment area. The procedure typically takes between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on the size of the area being treated.

Is the procedure right for me

A detailed consultation with your consultant plastic surgeon is essential prior to undergoing any surgical procedure. During the consultation, your surgeon will discuss your areas of concern, desired improvements, options available (including no treatment at all), and expected outcomes. Your surgeon will examine your neck and may take some photographs for your medical records. You will be given a 'cooling-off' period of at least 2 weeks between your initial consultation and surgery to ensure you have ample time to reflect on all aspects of the procedure before proceeding.

How is the procedure carried out

Should a face & neck lift be agreed upon as the most suitable treatment, the procedure will be carried out by your surgeon in our state-of-the-art operating theatre. A neck lift is performed under anaesthesia to improve the contour of the neck and jawline by tightening underlying muscles and removing excess skin and fat. The surgeon begins by making incisions, usually starting in front of the ear, curving around it, and ending behind the ear, with a small incision sometimes placed under the chin. Through these openings, the neck muscles (platysma) are tightened to smooth vertical bands, and excess fat is either removed directly or with liposuction. The skin is then gently lifted, repositioned, and any extra skin is trimmed away to create a firmer, more youthful neck profile. Once the desired contour is achieved, the incisions are closed with sutures, and a soft dressing or compression garment is applied to reduce swelling and support healing.

Aftercare and recovery

The surgery is usually performed as a day case under general anaesthetic or twilight anaesthesia. Our highly experienced medical team will be on hand throughout your stay to care for your needs. Following surgery, it is normal for there to be some numbness or tightness of the skin in the treated area. This usually improves within a few weeks or months. Keeping your head elevated will help reduce swelling. You will be encouraged to rest for the first few days, and light activity can resume after about two weeks. You may return to work and social activities once you feel comfortable, typically within two to three weeks. Avoid strenuous exercise for at least six weeks. Showering is permitted from the second post-operative day. You may notice mild oozing or pink discharge from the surgical site for a few days; this is normal and is usually associated with the local anaesthetic discharging. Swelling and bruising typically last around 10-14 days. Camouflage make-up can be helpful in covering bruising. The scars can be very well hidden with your hair so that you can return to work and socializing within a couple of weeks. Scars tend to be quite red in the first 6 weeks, turning to purple over the next 3 months and then fading to white. Most patients will form good quality scars over time. Normally, you will need a couple of weeks off work and will need to avoid vigorous exercise for around six weeks. Light exercise may be recommenced immediately. Showering is permitted on the second post-operative day.

What to expect after surgery

A neck lift is usually carried out under general anaesthetic (so you would be asleep) or local anaesthetic with sedation. The operation typically takes between two and four hours. You may be given antibiotics to prevent infection and small drainage tubes may be placed to remove any fluid or blood; these are removed before you go home. Your neck will feel tight and sore, and mild pain or discomfort is normal. Simple painkillers should be sufficient. A compression garment will be applied to help reduce bruising and

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swelling. This is usually worn for several days. Stitches are generally removed after seven to ten days. If your procedure is performed as a day case, a responsible adult should stay with you overnight.

Risk and complications

All surgical procedures carry risks. Your surgeon will discuss these in detail during your consultation to ensure you are fully informed. Serious complications are uncommon, but potential risks include:

- Permanent damage to nerves (rare)
- Infection
- Healing problems
- Extrusion of deep stitches
- Loss of blood supply to skin
- Change in skin colour
- Bleeding, swelling and bruising
- Asymmetry
- Poor scarring
- Increased or reduced sensation
- Damage to deeper structures
- Unsatisfactory results
- Persistent pain
- Changes over time
- Allergic reaction
- Possibility of revisional surgery
- Anaesthetic risks including allergic reaction, blood clots, heart attack, stroke or death

Results

Initially, your neck may feel tight or appear over-corrected. This usually settles within six weeks. You cannot judge the final result of your neck lift for about six to nine months. While the results are long-lasting, and the operation has been successful, the natural ageing process will continue, and some people choose to have a further procedure to have the skin tightened again.

Cost

The cost of isolated neck lift surgery varies depending on individual requirements. Costs may include:

- Anesthesia fees
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Medical tests
- Post-surgery garments
- Prescriptions for medication
- Surgeon's fee

After your consultation, and if you choose to proceed, you will be provided with a written quotation for your planned procedure.

Alternative treatments

A neck lift is the most effective way to tighten and smooth the skin of the neck. It does not affect the texture or quality of the skin itself. Treatments such as laser resurfacing, chemical peels or non-surgical skin tightening procedures may help improve skin tone or texture. For patients with excess fat beneath the chin but good skin elasticity, liposuction alone may be an alternative.

If you experience any problems, concerns, or display any symptoms such as increased pain, fever, signs of infection or pronounced bleeding following treatment, please call our direct patient line immediately for assistance on 07908 891059.

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Patient Pre & Post-Operative Care Guide

Pre-Operative Preparations

6-Week Period Before Surgery-

Patients requiring twilight or general anesthesia should not travel long haul for the 6-week period before and 6-week period after surgery. Refrain from using any nicotine products including cigarettes, nicotine vapes and chewing gum.

4 Weeks Before Surgery-

Stop taking the contraceptive pill and HRT 4 weeks before surgery if this has been advised by your Surgeon or anesthetist.

2 Weeks Before Surgery-

We would recommend that you start taking Arnica anti-bruising tablets, three times a day, two weeks prior to and two weeks after surgery (Or follow the specific guidance provided by the manufacturer). These are available from several health and wellbeing stores, including Holland & Barratt.

1 Week Before Surgery-

Avoid Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Nurofen and other similar painkillers one week before and two weeks after surgery. Paracetamol is the safest painkiller to take, if necessary.

Stop taking Vitamin E and its compounds (such as evening primrose oil, fish oils, garlic and garlic capsules) 1 week before surgery and 2 weeks after surgery. Taking Vitamin E in any form can cause bleeding and post-operative complications.

1 Day Before And On The Day Of Surgery-

Shower all over (including your hair and face) with Hibiscrub antiseptic liquid soap (provided on prescription from Coppergate Clinic) the day before and morning of your surgery before coming into the clinic. Do not apply moisturiser after showering.

Day Of Surgery-

You must avoid eating solid food and milky drinks for 6 hours prior to your appointment for sedation. Water, clear drinks, black tea and black coffee can be consumed for up to 2 hours before your sedation/general anesthetic.

You must take your routine medicines at the usual time, unless advised otherwise and bring them with you (including inhalers).

At least one nail must be free from acrylic or nail polish nails as a monitor will be placed on a finger.

You may be discharged from the clinic wearing a compression garment around your face. If you think that you may feel self-conscious about this, we recommend that you bring a hat or scarf to wear, along with sunglasses.

Post-Operative Instructions

Average Length Of Stay-

The surgery will be performed as a day case under a general anesthetic or twilight anesthesia unless your Surgeon advised otherwise during consultation. **If you live further than a 1-hour drive from the clinic, it is mandatory to stay in the vicinity until the following day.**

6-Week Period After Surgery-

Patients requiring twilight or general anesthesia should not travel long haul for the 6-week period before and 6-week period after surgery.

0-2 Weeks After Surgery

- It is essential to ensure activity is kept to a minimum and to rest as much as possible
- Wear the provided compression garment day and night (If provided by your surgeon), except for when showering
- Wear the provided TED stockings day and night until you are up and about as normal
- Shower if you wish and feel free to wash your hair, but please be as quick as possible and do not linger
- Dressings should be gently patted dry before the compression garment is put back on. At your follow up appointment, your surgeon will guide you on when leisurely showers and baths may resume
- Keep your head up to reduce swelling and sleep with extra pillows to raise your head
- Paracetamol can be taken as required

2 Weeks After Surgery

- Gentle activity may resume (for example driving) but do listen to your body- it will tell you if you are overdoing things

6-12 Weeks After Surgery

- Swimming and more strenuous exercise may resume, as advised by your surgeon at your follow up appointment

12 Weeks After Surgery

- The scar and surrounding skin can be moisturized daily.

If you experience any problems or have concerns following surgery, please do not hesitate to call our direct patient line for assistance on 07908 891059.