

Vr Facelift

Patient Information

Background

As part of the ageing process, skin progressively loses its elasticity, and our muscles tend to slacken. The stresses of daily life, effects of gravity and exposure to sun can be seen on our faces. The folds and smile lines deepen, the corners of the mouth droop, the jaw line sags, and the skin of the neck becomes slack. Around the eyes, the eyebrows droop and the skin of the eyelids gathers in loose folds. In the skin the first sign is fine wrinkles developing around the lips, at the outer corners of the eye and lines of expression. 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 face does not necessarily reflect the rate that the rest of our body and mind is ageing and many people feel frustrated that the face they see in the mirror is not the one they feel should be there. Substantial weight loss can produce similar changes in facial appearance to those of the ageing process. There are many different types of facelift designed to reduce and soften visible signs of ageing. Given the variety of options available, it is essential to carefully evaluate your face and discuss your needs and expectations in order to select the most appropriate technique. With a surgical facelift, the deeper tissues of the face are lifted and tightened and several centimetres of skin are removed. The different types of facelift will give different results and it is therefore very important to appreciate what each procedure will, and more importantly, won't do. Most people seeking surgery request a result that whilst freshens and rejuvenates the face whilst retaining a natural appearance.

What is a Vr Facelift?

The Vr stands for **V**ertical vector, **r** incision facelift. It was developed at the York clinic to give patients the option of a procedure that gives definite subtle improvement to the jowl and jawline area whilst being performed safely and easily under local anaesthetic. Permanent deep sutures are used in a similar technique to that used in a full face and neck lift. The ideal patient for this type of procedure is someone with mild to moderate jowl laxity and reasonable quality skin. This is **not** a neck lift, therefore patients with specific issues around neck laxity should consider a procedure tailored to that area. Although Vr patients commonly report some improvement in neck skin laxity following surgery. During your consultation, we will explain your suitability for this procedure and discuss other options. Clear information will be given on your likely outcome and any risks associated with the procedures.

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 area/s of concern, desired improvements, options available (including no treatment at all) and expected outcomes. Your surgeon will examine your face and neck and may take some photographs for your medical records. You will be given a 'cooling-off' period of at least 2 weeks between initial consultation and the date of your operation to ensure you have ample time to reflect on all aspects of the procedure before proceeding (although please bear in mind the waiting lists for our surgeons mean this period is invariably significantly longer).

How is the procedure carried out?

Should a Vr Facelift 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. The skin is carefully cleaned and marked. After, the skin is numbed in front of the ear and a small cut is made to sit within the nooks and crannies of the ear and hairline designed to hide the scar in natural lines. The skin in front of the ear is carefully lifted from the deeper tissues and several tightening stitches are then placed to lift the muscles and ligaments. The redundant skin is then lifted in an upward direction with any excess being trimmed accurately away. Usually around 2.5 - 3.0 cm of skin is removed on each side. The edges of the cuts are very carefully closed to give discrete and often hidden incision lines. The surgery is performed in around 2 hours under local anaesthetic. Our highly experienced medical team will be on hand before, during and after your procedure to care for your needs.

Aftercare and recovery

Following surgery most patients experience swelling, bruising and some discomfort. Showering is permitted on the second post-operative day. Stitches are gently removed after 10 days and advice on further care is given.

What to expect after surgery

Following surgery you will be given antibiotics and antibacterial cream to keep the wound clean. The cheek and ear area will feel tight and tender for the first day or so. Simple painkillers should be enough to keep you comfortable.

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Risks and Complications

All surgical procedures are associated with risks. Your surgeon will explain these in detail during initial consultation, enabling you to reach an informed decision on whether you wish to proceed. Serious complications are uncommon, however patients should be aware of the following complications prior to undergoing a Vr Facelift-

- Permanent damage to the facial nerves – although rare, the risk cannot be discounted
- Anaesthesia risks including allergic reaction, blood clots, heart attack, stroke and death
- Infection
- Healing problems
- Extrusion of deep stitches
- Loss of blood supply to skin
- Change of the colour of skin
- Bleeding, swelling and bruising
- Asymmetry
- Poor scarring of skin
- Increased or reduced sensation
- Damage to deeper structures
- Unsatisfactory results
- Pain, which may persist
- Change over time
- Allergic reaction
- Possibility of revisional surgery

Results

At first your jaw may seem a little too tight. This usually settles down within a few days of the operation. Most patients are pleased with the final result, but some find their new shape difficult to get used to. This may happen to you. You cannot judge the final result of your facelift until around six weeks postoperatively, when swelling, bruising and scarring has subsided. Even if the operation is a success, you may need another operation in the future to have the skin tightened again.

Cost

Prices for Vr Facelift surgery can vary. Costs may include-

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

After consultation and if you are planning to proceed with surgery, you will be given a written quotation regarding the cost of the planned procedure.

Alternative treatments

The Vr facelift is an effective way to define the jawline and reduce jowls. The procedure will not resolve neck concerns or get rid of wrinkles around your eyes, forehead and mouth. Other facial surgery such as a full face and neck lift or treatments such as Botox injections can help with this. Facelifts and neck lifts of any nature do not change the texture and look of your skin, though treatments such as laser resurfacing or chemical peels may help with this. Sometimes, fat grafting or lipofilling can be performed instead of or as well as facelift, to make your face and skin look younger.

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.

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Patient Pre & Post-Operative Care Guide

Pre-Operative Preparations

6 weeks before 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 anaesthetist.

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. 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.

Day of surgery-

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.

Remove lenses prior to arrival at the clinic.

You will be discharged from the clinic with a compression garment. If you think that you may feel self-conscious about this, we recommend that you bring a scarf to help disguise the garment.

Post-Operative Instructions

Average length of stay-

The surgery will be performed as a day case under a local anaesthesia unless your surgeon advised otherwise during consultation. **Patients should not driving for a minimum of 24 hours post operatively, so alternative means of transport should be arranged. If you live further than a 1 hour drive from the clinic, it is mandatory to stay in the vicinity until the following day.**

0-2 weeks after surgery

- It is essential to ensure activity is kept to a minimum and to rest as much as possible. The less you do, the less you will bruise
- Shower if you wish and feel free to wash your hair, but please take additional care around the suture line
- Keep your head up to reduce swelling and sleep with extra pillows to raise your head
- Avoid bending down, hot baths, heavy lifting and anything else that would naturally cause your face to redden to minimise bruising
- Paracetamol can be taken as required

2 days after surgery onwards

- Gentle walks are permitted
- Driving may resume

10 days after surgery onwards

- Once sutures have been removed, use of a light moisturiser is recommended.

3 weeks after surgery onwards

- Moderate cardiovascular exercise may resume but do listen to your body- it will tell you if you are overdoing things. Deeper level healing will continue for several weeks and overdoing things may lead to secondary bruising

6-12 weeks after surgery

- More strenuous exercise may resume, as advised by your surgeon at your follow up appointment

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