

Going home following reconstructive surgery to your face, head or neck area

Wound care

- Always keep your wound area clean and dry
- Wash the area daily with a non-fragranced soap or saline to keep the wound clean
- If your wound is in your hairline, wash your hair with a gentle shampoo.

If you have had surgery to your nose

- Avoid putting any pressure on your nose by blowing through it or sneezing through it
- If you feel that you might sneeze or cough, open your mouth and allow the pressure to escape through your mouth, avoiding pressure inside your nose
- Do not blow your nose or poke anything inside it; you may gently clean around the nostrils but not deep inside.

If directed by your doctor or nurse, you may need to apply ointment to your scars twice a day.

Reducing the swelling

You can expect to have moderate to severe bruising and swelling during the first two days after your surgery. This will improve in a few weeks.

- Sleep elevated on a few pillows for two weeks
- Avoid very hot baths and any exercise that increases your blood pressure for two weeks after your surgery
- Do not risk knocking your head area and avoid sports for six weeks
- Avoid bending over. To pick something up from the floor for the first two weeks, bend your knees and lower yourself down - this is to reduce the swelling.



Things to look out for

- Signs of redness or swelling around your wound area
- Feeling generally unwell
- High temperature
- Odour coming from the wounds
- Burning sensation around your wounds
- Signs of swelling, increased pain or increased fluid leakage from the wound
- Bleeding from the wound.

You should not smoke after your operation as smoking will increase the risk of complications. You should not return to work until your plastic surgeon advises you to; this could be up to eight weeks depending on your job.

Contact details

Please contact your Clinical Nurse Specialist if you would like any further advice.

Chelsea

Tel: 020 7811 8318 (NHS)

Tel: 020 7352 8171 Ext. 1573 (Private care)

Sutton

Tel: 020 8642 6011 Ext. 4345 (NHS and Private care)

Alternatively, please call:

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline: 020 8915 6899

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week

