DR AFSHIN YOUSEFPOUR
Chirurgie Plastic du Visage
Chirurgie Maxillo-Faciale

Aftercare following parotidectomy

These instructions guide you after surgery on the parotid gland. They help you heal well, protect your eye if the eyelid closes less well, and recognise the rare signs that need an immediate response. They complement the personalised protocol Dr Yousefpour gives you.

What is normal

- Moderate swelling in front of and below the ear for 1 to 2 weeks.
- Some discomfort when chewing for the first few days, and sometimes a sore throat for a day or two after the anaesthetic.
- Numbness of the earlobe and cheek skin, which is common and usually improves over a few months.
- If the facial nerve was heavily handled, temporary weakness of part of the face, which recovers in the vast majority of cases within a few weeks to a few months.
- Tiredness for one to two weeks.

After surgery, step by step

When	What to do
In hospital	Usually one night in hospital. The drain, which removes blood and lymph from under the scar, is taken out after 24 to 48 hours, before you go home.
The first 48 hours	Keep the scar clean and dry. After that you may shower: let the water run over without rubbing and pat dry. Apply the antibiotic ointment prescribed by Dr Yousefpour along the suture line twice a day until the stitches are removed, unless skin glue was used.
The first week	Sleep with your head raised (two pillows) to limit swelling. For pain, take paracetamol as prescribed; no aspirin or ibuprofen without agreement. Restart any anticoagulant only according to the protocol you are given.
For 1 to 2 weeks	Eat soft food that needs little chewing. Avoid very acidic, sour, spicy, salty or sweet food and chewing gum: they make the gland produce saliva and can encourage a collection of saliva under the scar.
Around day 7	Removal of non-dissolvable stitches at the practice, if needed.
For 2 weeks	No lifting over 5 kg, no sport or intense effort. Walking is encouraged from the next day. Back to normal activities after 10 to 14 days.
Driving	Wait until you no longer need strong painkillers and can turn your head easily to both sides.

When	What to do
If the eyelid does not close properly	Artificial tears about every 2 hours during the day, eye ointment at night. At night, if the eye stays open, close the lid with a small strip of paper tape running from the lid to the cheek, or use a clear eye shield. Do not put a dressing directly on the eye. Wear glasses outdoors against wind and dust.
Follow-up visit	Check of the scar and facial nerve function, and explanation of the laboratory analysis of the tumour.

Contact Dr Yousefpour the same day if

- a soft swelling forms or re-forms under the scar, or clear fluid leaks from the wound: this may be a collection of saliva, which is usually simple to treat;
- you have a fever, or the scar becomes red, warm or painful, or discharges pus;
- facial weakness appears or gets worse;
- your eye is irritated, red or dry despite artificial tears;
- pain is not relieved by the prescribed treatment.

In the following weeks and months

- The earlobe sometimes stays numb for several months: protect it from a very hot hairdryer, curling tongs and cold, and take care when shaving.
- Temporary facial weakness usually recovers within a few weeks to a few months. Keep protecting the eye as long as the eyelid does not close completely.
- A few months after surgery, the cheek may flush and sweat during meals: this is Frey syndrome. It is rare and treatable, notably with botulinum toxin.
- Protect the scar from the sun for the first few months so that it becomes as discreet as possible.

Before surgery

- Stop smoking, which slows healing.
- Tell us about all your medicines and supplements. Aspirin, anticoagulants and antiplatelet medicines are stopped only according to the protocol you are given and with the agreement of the doctor who prescribed them.
- Have soft food ready for the first few days, two pillows, and someone to take you home when you leave hospital.
- Usually allow 10 to 14 days before returning to your normal activities.

Emergency: call 112 or go to the emergency department if

A haematoma, a collection of blood under the scar, is rare. It usually appears within the first 24 to 48 hours.

- Your neck or cheek swells quickly and becomes tight, especially on one side.
- You have difficulty breathing or swallowing.
- Bleeding continues despite 10 minutes of firm pressure with a gauze pad.
- Your eye becomes very painful and red, or your vision drops, while the eyelid is not closing properly.

Do not wait for a reply from Dr Yousefpour on WhatsApp: call the emergency services first, then let him know as soon as possible.

These instructions are general information. Dr Yousefpour's personalised protocol always takes precedence. For non-urgent questions, message Dr Yousefpour on WhatsApp.

Contact

Face Clinic, 406 Chaussée de Bruxelles, 1410 Waterloo
WhatsApp message to Dr Yousefpour: +32 491 07 04 32
In an emergency: 112
www.faceexpert.be