

Face Lift

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About

The medical term for a facelift is rhytidectomy. The term “rhytid” is derived from Greek meaning wrinkle so you can understand that the procedure was originally performed to get rid of wrinkles in the aging face.

Today however, face lifting has come to mean more than just trying to eliminate wrinkles.

In fact a facelift is undertaken to make the face look more both youthful and fresh. However while the aim is to look better, the expectation should not be to look unrealistically younger.

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As we grow older the tissues lose some of their elasticity, tone and volume. This causes the face to sag and the skin to become more wrinkled.

Indications

Contrary to commonly held belief, not everybody who has a facelift is old. The less invasive, more limited procedures are often employed for younger people in their forties or fifties.

You may have decided that you want a fresher appearance for a lot of reasons.

Perhaps you have reached the decision because you feel younger than you look.

You may want to pursue a new career or perhaps you just want to improve your appearance to give you a bit more self confidence.

Sometimes a relationship has ended and you feel a surgical makeover will help you to achieve a “fresh start”.

In fact people have many motivations and these may just be personal. Whatever your reason may be **SFMedica** surgeons will discuss with you anything you need to know regarding a face lift on an individualised basis and after a thorough assessment and clinical examination we will be able to tell you if you would be a good candidate for a face lift and what exactly you should expect after the surgery.

We want our clients to leave the consultation room with all the facts needed to make an informed decision. **SFMedica** has put together some of the top UK surgeons and doctors in their field ensuring the highest standards of care and the best possible results.

Contact us today to arrange a consultation with one of our specialist doctors who will be happy to discuss treatment, as well as answer any questions you may have.

Surgery Explained

There are a number of different ways that a facelift can be done. The method chosen depends on the appearance of person undergoing the procedure and their individual needs and expectations.

For example those who cannot afford much “downtime” because of personal or work commitments would most often elect to undergo a less extensive procedure. This means having a less invasive lift, where a shorter surgical incision is used. Such techniques are more often used in younger people, often in their forties or fifties.

This is referred to as a “**short scar**” facelift or **MACS (=Minimal Access Cranial Suspension)** lift. The cut or incision is in front of the ear and hairline. Internal stitches are applied to the tissues under the skin to lift them up and the excess skin is removed.

The main effect is to lift the mid face area and tighten up the jaw line or “jowl” area.

This more limited lift heals quicker so that less recovery time is needed.

However this does not mean that the result is not as good. Extensive surgery is often not required to achieve the desired outcome in this part of the face. In fact the trend in modern facelifting is shifting towards the type of surgery that is less extensive and requires less recovery time.

The more traditional or sub **SMAS (=Superficial Muscular Aponeurotic System)** facelift uses a longer incision that extends around the earlobe and behind the ear into the hairline at the back of the ear.

This is particularly used in people who have sagging of the neck as well as aging of the face. The surgery is more extensive, with a wider area of skin “undermined” and usually produces more excess skin to be trimmed.

The actual lift relies on either stitching or removing some of the tissues or “SMAS” under the skin to achieve the lift. Recovery time is longer and the surgery takes up to four hours to perform. People who have this procedure are often in the older age group.

Preparation

People need to be aware that smoking is a big risk factor in rhytidectomy. It is essential that every effort be made to stop smoking for at least two weeks before and after a face lift. In fact there are times when heavy smoking is just too much of a risk to proceed with the procedure.

Other medical conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure need to be identified and treated before surgery.

Medication such as aspirin and anti-inflammatory drugs that affect blood clotting should be avoided.

Anaesthesia

The short scar lift can be performed under local anaesthesia and sedation.

The more extensive lifting procedures are more often performed under general anaesthetic although it is possible to use local anaesthesia and sedation. An overnight stay in hospital is usual.

Aftercare

If a drain is used it will be removed the day after surgery unless there is bleeding when it may be kept in place for longer.

A phased return to normal activities is advised.

Vigorous exercise is to be avoided for five to six weeks but mild exercise can be done after about three weeks.

A return to work depends on the individual but with the short scar lift about a week off is required and for the sub SMAS lift two weeks is usual. However this depends on the degree of swelling and bruising.

Alcohol, smoking and medication that may cause bleeding need to be avoided for at least two weeks after surgery.

Complications

Face lift is just like any other surgery except that it is usually performed for healthy people who elect to have it done for non medical reasons. As such there can sometimes be complications such as bleeding or infection.

Complications are rare if post-operative instructions are followed.

Other problems that can occur may be a visible or ugly scar, facial weakness or a cosmetic result with which you are unhappy. Your surgeon will discuss these potential complications during your initial consultation and will outline the various techniques available to reduce the risk.

Should scarring become a concern to you then **SFMedica** can offer you a wide range of treatments to improve the appearance of your scar(s). Please see the relevant sections on our website.