

FACELIFT

Angelique M Berens, MD

The facelift (rhytidectomy) is a commonly performed plastic surgery procedure. It can provide a remarkable improvement in your appearance and give you a rejuvenated look. With aging, the skin, muscle, and fat pads in the face gradually fall. Facelifts can remove/reposition fat and remove any excess skin for a better contour around the jaw and neckline.

In the past, facelifts were often overdone. The old technique created a “windswept” look from too much tension on the facial skin. Our newer technique repositions the deeper tissues in the face, resulting in tension free skin closure. The decreased tension on the face results in a natural and longer lasting result. It also hides the incisions around the ear, around the hairline, and under the chin. Neck liposuction is often done at the same time to further improve the neckline's appearance. This newer procedure minimizes risks while giving you a natural looking improvement in your appearance.

First, you will have a preoperative visit with Dr. Berens. She will assess your skin type, skin, and muscle elasticity, and underlying facial anatomy. Then, you and Dr. Berens will discuss the best surgical option for you to obtain your desired results.

A facelift is typically performed in an outpatient surgery center under sedation or a general anesthetic. However, for some patients it can be completed in the office with a local anesthetic.

After the procedure, you will have a tight bandage around your face. This is to be worn for the first night to minimize swelling and bruising. At your first postoperative visit you will be given an elastic bandage to wear instead. You can take the elastic bandage on and off at home as needed. You should expect to feel well within the first two to three days after surgery. Though, you may consider using two weeks of recovery time due to the bruising and swelling that happens after surgery.

The following information serves as a guide for what to expect should you wish to proceed. It is important to follow these instructions as best as you can. Failure to do so may harm your result.

BEFORE SURGERY

1. Only take Extra Strength Tylenol® for aches and pains, starting at least 14 days before surgery. It is very important NOT to use any aspirin, aspirin containing compounds or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (i.e. ibuprofen, Motrin®, Advil®, Aleve®, Celebrex®, etc). These all work by thinning your blood, and can cause increased bleeding during surgery and increased bruising after surgery.
2. Do not take vitamin E supplements, fish oils, omega-3 supplements, or herbal supplements such as garlic, ginkgo, glucosamine, or ginseng for at least 14 days prior to surgery. These supplements may also increase the likelihood of bleeding and bruising. A prepackaged multivitamin product (such as One-A-Day® or Centrum®) is okay.
3. Please discuss use of any blood thinners (Coumadin®, warfarin, Plavix®) with Dr. Berens. Blood thinners are usually held for several days before surgery.
4. Avoid alcoholic beverages the night before surgery.

5. You will be taking antibiotics and pain medicine after your surgery. Your antibiotic and pain medication prescription will be faxed to your pharmacy. Please pick it up before the surgery. You should also purchase a tube of antibiotic ointment (e.g., bacitracin, Neosporin® or Polysporin®) to use on your stitches after the surgery.
6. Drinking one glass of pineapple or blueberry juice each day for two weeks before surgery may help decrease bruising.
7. If you wear contact lenses, do not wear them the day of surgery, instead wear your glasses. Most patients wait several days after surgery to resume wearing their contact lenses due to the swelling.
1. If you color or dye your hair, you should do this immediately before surgery. You will not be able to color your hair until one month after surgery.
8. If you are a smoker, you must quit smoking for at least one month before and after the surgery. Smoking causes narrowing of the blood vessels that can significantly delay healing and cause complications. If you decide to have surgery, this is an excellent time to stop smoking permanently. Use of nicotine substitutes (i.e., nicotine patches or gum) can also cause narrowing of the small blood vessels and should not be used.

DURING SURGERY

1. Surgery may take anywhere from 2-4 hours depending on the complexity of your procedure.
2. If your procedure is done in the operating room at a surgery center, you will receive intravenous sedation. If your procedure is done in the office with local anesthetic, you will receive prescriptions for relaxation medications to take before the surgery.
3. Please arrange for someone to bring you to and from surgery.

AFTER SURGERY

1. It is expected for the entire face to be swollen after surgery. The swelling may get worse over the first three days, then improve. Sleeping with your head elevated (on at least three pillows) for one week after surgery will help to minimize bruising and swelling.
2. Ice 20 minutes on, and 20min off over the cheeks, eyes, and forehead for the first 48-72 hours.
3. Take your pain medicine and antibiotics as directed. Extra Strength Tylenol® may be enough for your pain after the first few days. You have been prescribed a narcotic pain medication. Use this only if needed and always adhere to the recommended dose. Narcotics have serious side effects such as nausea, vomiting and slowed breathing. Use of narcotics can increase your risk of complications such as hospitalization and death, particularly if you have sleep apnea. Avoid alcohol or other drug use while taking prescribed pain medications.
4. The day after surgery, you will come to Dr. Berens's office to change your bandage. You will go home with a new elastic dressing that can be taken on and off at home. You should wear this as much as possible during the first week, only removing it for necessary activities (i.e., bathing, eating).
5. Do not exercise, do any heavy lifting or bending over for the first week.
6. You may shower on the second day after surgery. Be very gentle with washing and drying your hair. Apply antibiotic ointment over all your incisions and replace the elastic bandage after showering.
7. Continue to be careful while wearing the elastic bandage. Do not make any sudden movements of your head. It is best to move more like a "robot," with your head and shoulders moving together.
8. Apply the antibiotic ointment over all your stitches at least three times a day until you return to the office to have the stitches removed.

9. One week after the surgery you will have another postoperative visit for stitches removal.

WEEKS AFTER SURGERY

1. It is very important that you use sunscreen after suture removal. While your incisions are healing, they are very sensitive to the sun and can become darker than the surrounding skin. In general, it is advised to wear sunscreen (at least an SPF 30) daily to protect your skin from sun damage.
2. Continue to wear the elastic face bandage for one week after surgery. Wear it as much as possible during the day at home, but a minimum of every night.
3. Your earlobes and other areas of the skin may be numb after the surgery. It should slowly improve over the next few months.
4. You should expect to return to work and/or social situations within two weeks of the surgery. Although you will be feeling well before that, you may still have some bruising which takes longer to disappear.
5. You may start your exercise regimen at two weeks after surgery.

Please call the office for any of the following:

- Any questions and/or concerns.
- Significant increase in pain or swelling.
- Temperature over 100°F, unusual bleeding, or purulent drainage.
- Change(s) in vision

During business hours please call the office at (360) 454-1941. After hours a doctor can be reached at (425) 258-9000.

If you cannot reach our office for any reason present to the emergency department for evaluation of any life or vision threatening concerns.

PART OF BEING WELL IS BEING HEARD

Do you have an experience, feedback, or advice that you would like to share with me or with other patients? Consider sharing your feedback on the following platforms:

GOOGLE REVIEWS

These reviews will help patients who use Google to learn more about their physician. It is helpful to use the name of your procedure in the review.

1. Go to: [google.com/maps](https://www.google.com/maps)
2. Search: Angelique Berens
3. Scroll to the very bottom on the left and click "write a review"
4. Write details about your experience or advice for future patients!

EVERETT CLINIC FEEDBACK SURVEYS

Help us understand what works well so that we can improve the experience for the next patient. We share comments left in the provider section online on [everettclinic.com](https://www.everettclinic.com) for our providers' profiles.

1. Go to www.EverettClinic.com/give-us-your-feedback
2. Share your advice and/or feedback about your experience!

REALSELF.COM

This Seattle-based website makes sure the reviews and physicians are verified. They do ask for some personal information from you, but they never share it.

1. Go to www.realself.com/review/write
2. Select "Treatment: Facelift"
3. Insert "Angelique M Berens, MD" for the provider
4. Share your thoughts!