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FACE LIFT (RHYTIDOPLASTY)

WHAT IS A FACE LIFT?

The technical name for a facelift is "rhytidectomy." In this surgical procedure, excess face and neck skin are removed and the tissues under the skin are tightened. Activities such as smoking, sunbathing, outdoor activities, and stress can alter the appearance of the face. Additionally, as we age deep creases may form between the nose and mouth, the jaw line may grow slack and sag, and folds and fat deposits may appear around the neck. A face lift can reduce these signs of aging, resulting in a firmer, fresher appearance.

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR A FACE LIFT?

Candidates must be in good health, have no active diseases or serious, pre-existing medical conditions, and must have realistic expectations of the outcome of the surgery. Facelifts are most commonly performed on patients between 40 to 60 years old. The procedure can produce good results for people from 60 to 80 as well. If you have strong, well defined bone structure and some skin elasticity, you are most likely to have good results from a facelift.

NOTE: You may not be a candidate for surgery if you smoke, have recently quit smoking, or if you are exposed to second-hand smoke. Primary and secondary smoking decreases blood flow to the body's tissues. This can result in prolonged wound healing, skin loss, infection, increased scarring, and a number of other complications depending on the kind of procedure performed.

HOW IS THE PROCEDURE PERFORMED?

The type and size of facelift depends on location and extent of skin laxity. Sizes range from "mini" to "standard". Usually, an incision is made in the hair near the temple and continues to the front of the ear, around the ear lobe, behind the ear and into the hair. The muscles and sagging tissue are tightened and excess skin is removed. The remaining skin is repositioned to create a more youthful look. The incision is closed with sutures, or with metal clips on the scalp. A small incision may be made under the chin if a neck lift is needed.

OPTIONS TO ENHANCE THE PROCEDURE

A face lift may be performed alone, or in conjunction with a forehead lift and/or eye lift (blepharoplasty), or nose surgery (rhinoplasty). Dr. Anzarut may also recommend injections of Restylane or Botox to help alleviate deep creases in your forehead or frown lines between your eyebrows. To improve the texture of your facial skin, laser resurfacing or chemical peeling may be used.

PLANNING FOR YOUR SURGERY

First, schedule a personal consultation with Dr. Anzarut. Communication is vital in reaching your goals. You will have the opportunity to discuss your goals and the results you'd like to achieve. Dr. Anzarut will work with you to reach an understanding about what you can expect from this procedure and what long-term benefits you will experience. Every patient is different, and Dr. Anzarut will choose the surgical technique and treatment plan that is right for you. During your initial consultation:

- Provide a complete medical history. Include information about any previous surgical procedures; past and present medical conditions; and all medications or herbal supplements you are taking.
- Expect Dr. Anzarut to conduct a complete physical examination.
- Be prepared to discuss possible risks and complications of the procedure.

PREPARING FOR YOUR SURGERY

You will be given specific instructions on how to prepare for your surgery. Dr. Anzarut will instruct you on how to prepare for surgery, including guidelines on eating and drinking, smoking, and which vitamins and medications should be taken or avoided. You should arrange for someone to drive you home after your surgery, whether your surgery is done on an outpatient or inpatient basis. You may also want to make arrangements for someone to help you out for a day or two after you leave the hospital.

WHERE YOUR SURGERY WILL BE PERFORMED

Your procedure will take place in the hospital or at an accredited private surgical facility. The majority of these procedures are completed on an out-patient basis.

TYPES OF ANESTHESIA

You'll remain comfortable throughout the entire procedure. In most cases, general anesthetic is used so that you will sleep throughout the procedure; although local anesthesia with intravenous sedation is also an option for some patients.