

ActiPatch Therapy Following Cosmetic Surgery of the Face and Neck: A Valuable Adjunct to the Postoperative Management

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ActiPatch Therapy has become an integral part of the postoperative treatment plan/regime in my patients following Blepharoplasty, Rhinoplasty, Facelift, Neck lift and Liposuction of the Neck. After completing a Prospective Observational Study which evaluated the effects of using ActiPatch on 32 patients (52 procedures) as compared to a control group of 30 patients (45 procedures) who underwent the same cosmetic procedures without the use of ActiPatch, we found that ActiPatch Therapy decreased postoperative swelling, bruising, localized fibrosis and localized discomfort by 30-50%. Because of this Observational Study I have added ActiPatch Therapy to my postoperative protocol for patients undergoing cosmetic surgical procedures of the face and neck and who desire a decrease in their postoperative recovery time.

I performed a prospective observational study on 32 patients (52 procedures) using ActiPatch Therapy and compared them to 30 patients (45 procedures) control group to evaluate the effect of ActiPatch on postoperative 1) swelling and bruising, 2) localized subcutaneous fibrosis and 3) localized discomfort. Both groups of patients were on the same preoperative protocol of vitamin supplements and postoperative protocol which continued the use of supplements and added the use of Cox 2 inhibitors for localized pain. In addition, all patients had Manual Lymphatic Drainage with a specific protocol of 2 visits per week for 6 weeks. Both groups of patients were evaluated by a Nurse Practitioner, the treating physical therapist and the senior author at 3 days, 5-6 days, 7-10 days, 13-14 days, 21 days, 28 days and 42 days postoperatively. An observational data sheet was completed at each visit which documented 1) localized pain, 2) swelling and bruising, 3) the soft tissue fibrosis which is characterized by subcutaneous lumps and tightness and discomfort when moving the operated part. The ActiPatch was either placed under the gauze head wrap dressing in the facelift, neck lift and neck liposuction patients, and at the glabella or corner of the brow in the Rhinoplasty and Blepharoplasty patients. All patients used the ActiPatch for the first three days and some continued to use it for a total of ten days. The endpoint was when all visible bruising had resolved.

We found that ActiPatch therapy was very effective in decreasing postoperative swelling and bruising. Specifically, our observers noted a 30-50% reduction in the number of days the patients had visible swelling and ecchymosis compared to the control group. Both groups had Manual Lymphatic drainage and Deep Tissue Release Therapy scheduled for 2 times per week for six weeks.(ref: "Manual Lyphatic Drainage: An Integral Component of Postoperative Care in the Plastic Surgery Patient" Presented at the Annual Conference of the American Society of Lymphology, Chicago, IL August 1999 and "The role of Manual Lymphatic Drainage in the Postoperative Care of Cosmetic Plastic Surgery Patients", Presented at the Annual Conference of the American Society of Lymphology, Las Vegas, Nevada October,2004.) The ActiPatch group required 30-50% fewer sessions to decrease swelling, bruising and localized discomfort from soft tissue fibrosis. The endpoint of Lymphatic Drainage Therapy is decided by both the patient and the therapist who together decide that the operated tissues feel and look normal. ActiPatch Therapy is very useful to decrease the swelling, bruising and localized discomfort in patients undergoing cosmetic of the face and neck. The following protocol is now used in my practice for all patients who desire a decrease in their postoperative recovery time following Cosmetic Surgery of the face and neck.

Blepharoplasty: ActiPatch 500 either over each eyebrow, or at the corner of each brow or under each lower eyelid. 24 hours per day for 3-7 days. It is removed for showering and replaced by moistening the hydrogel. Some patients used paper tape to help hold the ActiPatch in position.

Rhinoplasty: ActiPatch 500 at the Glabella 24 hours per day for 3-7 days.

Facelift: ActiPatch 500 is placed on each preauricular area under the gauze head wrap dressing. When the dressing is removed the ActiPatch is placed either in the pre or post auricular area as the swelling drops down the face to the neck lymph nodes over the first 3-10 days after surgery.

Neck Lift: ActiPatch 500 is placed on both sides of the neck under the ear and under the gauze head wrap dressing. When the dressing is removed the ActiPatch is worn on the neck are where the most swelling and bruising is visible for the first 3-10 days.

Neck Liposuction: same protocol as Neck Lift.

ActiPatch is removed for showering and replaced by moistening the hydrogel. Some patients use paper tape to help hold the ActiPatch in position.