

A note to the patient's spouse, significant other, or family members:

The person you care about has chosen to undergo cosmetic surgery to improve their appearance, boost their self-esteem, and increase their happiness. For some patients, the days and weeks after surgery can be a challenging experience both physically and emotionally. And while you obviously care about the patient, you may not be aware of the significant role *you* will play in their recovery.

All operations will require at least a few days where the patient's activities will be decreased. Anything you can do to alleviate daily chores and obligations during these first few days will help speed the patient's recovery. Many patients try to minimize the impact that surgery will have on their lifestyle. They don't want their spouse, significant other, or family members to be inconvenienced. But *patients who rest after surgery get better faster*. This is not the time to make plans for parties, dinner out, or having guests over.

You may not realize it, and the patient may not admit it, but activities such as these place additional burdens on the patient when they need to use those energies to help recover. The patient needs to take it easy for the first few days after surgery. The doctor will give you more specific instructions depending on the particular operation, but all patients need to rest during this initial period.

The patient also needs your support for their emotional recovery after surgery; a process that can take several months as nature completes the healing process. It is easy to understand why this is a difficult time emotionally for the patient. They went through this surgery to look better and at first because of bruising and swelling they often look worse. It is also natural for the patient to make judgements about the results of surgery and they will also be very interested in the response of others to the changes in their appearance. The *most important thing you can do* for the patient is to *reassure him or her* that they *look good* and *with each passing day or week reassure them that they look better*. What may seem like an inconsequential or joking remark on your behalf is often

interpreted as dissatisfaction or rejection by the patient. They need your approval at this time. The easiest way to make their recovery as emotionally painless as possible (as well as making your relationship as frictionless as possible) is to *be supportive and complimentary*. If you have a concern, ask the doctor on the side. He'll be happy to address your concerns. Don't increase the patient's anxiety by pointing out swelling, asymmetry, etceteras that in all likelihood will only be temporary.

Thanks for taking the time to read this letter. And remember, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to call us.

Sincerely,
Pure Plastic Surgery Team