Anne Dancey
PLASTIC SURGERY

Pinnaplasty
Nicotine & Surgery

Nicotine and Surgery

Patients may wonder why it is important to stop smoking before, during and after surgery? This is simply because of the nicotine itself and not the cigarette (please see the conclusion from this science journal – **https://bit.ly/2C5gTE3**).

In simple terms, all patients who use nicotine must cease doing so **at least 2 weeks prior to and after surgery**. For patient safety, I will not operate on any patient that continues to smoke or use nicotine within this timeframe. A patient's General Practitioner is the best person to seek for advice on how to quit smoking.

If surgery is cancelled due to non-compliance by you, I understand the disappointment caused, but it is far better to delay non-urgent surgery than to risk serious complications and an unsatisfactory result.

Patients who continue to use nicotine, in its various forms without adhering to the 2-week cessation period and have elected to undergo surgery, must be aware of the main risks and complications associated with it:

- The impact of nicotine decreases blood circulation and has a significant impact on the body's ability to heal itself; as it cuts off the blood supply and impairs healing.
- This means you are 3 times more likely to develop an infection, wound break down and haematomas.
- Wound breakdown can culminate in complete necrosis of the skin, which potentially could take months to heal and may involve multiple surgeries to resolve.
- Cessation of nicotine use is particularly crucial for surgeries involving extensive undermining of skin, as the procedure itself already reduces skin perfusion. In such cases, nicotine can further compromise blood flow, increasing the risk of complications. The procedures most affected are abdominoplasty, breast reduction, mastopexy and facelifts. However, it will affect any surgery.

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- You must stop all nicotine products for 2 weeks prior to surgery to minimise these risks. This includes all the following: hookah, cigars, cigarettes, pipes, e-cigarettes and vapes that contain nicotine, nicotine patches and nicotine gum.

I hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions or require a little more information, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

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