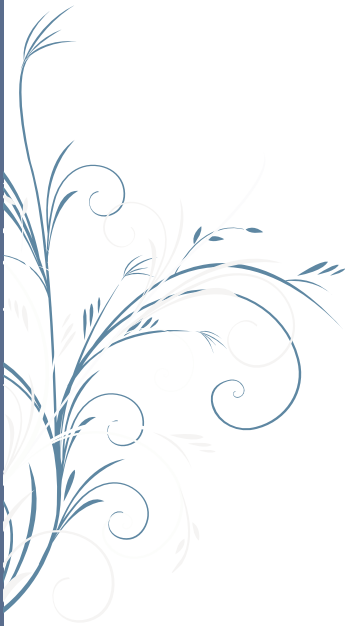




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Cosmetic Plastic Surgeon

## The Short Scar Facelift





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The classical operation of Facelift, initially described by Sir Harold Gillies has been in use for over 60 years. It is a tried and trusted technique which rejuvenates the face without changing one's facial features. A facelift removes the tired heavy appearance by lifting and smoothing out the sagging jowls and neck, re-defining the contour of the neck and jaw line.

There are several factors which influence aging of the face. A major one is heredity. Gravity is a constant factor its effect being to pull the soft facial tissues downwards causing sagging of the cheeks, which accentuates the crease line running from the nostrils to the sides of the mouth. The effect is also seen on the jaw line and underneath the chin in the sub-mental area. As we age, we tend to lose some of the facial fat, and this in combination with decreased skin elasticity leads to sagging of the facial features. This can be made worse by excess exposure to ultraviolet light. It is well known that people who live in tropical climates have a prematurely aged skin. The short scar facelift procedure is most sought after within the over forties age group. However, increasingly short scar facelifts are being carried out on younger patients.

The facelift has always been regarded as a major surgical procedure but recent advances in using the short scar technique have made it a much safer and comfortable experience. It is important to remember however, that although a short scar facelift can wind the clock back by reversing the effects of gravity, it will not erase permanent creases, particularly around the lips. Further procedures like laser resurfacing or chemical peels can improve those lines and can be carried out in conjunction with a facelift.

At your consultation you should provide the surgeon with a general medical history, together with details of any previous facial surgery. Slight differences in facial symmetry are normal and will have been pointed out as they often go unnoticed by the patient. By gently lifting the facial skin, the surgeon is able to assess what could be expected post operatively. It is advisable to bring with you at the consultation photos from the time you felt you looked your best.

Over the years the classical operation has undergone a number of modifications aimed at improving the overall results with the smallest possible scars around the hairline. Some of these modifications include the MACS lift with chin fat removal. Each of these modifications can be tailor-made to suit individual needs. It is possible to undergo correction of eye bags (see notes regarding blepharoplasty) as well as other procedures at the same time as the short scar facelift. Free fat transfer from other parts of the body is sometimes used to restore the lost volumes of the central part of the face.

# The Operation

The short scar facelift is carried out under general anaesthetic and an overnight stay in hospital is usually required. Occasionally procedures can sometimes be carried out under a local anaesthetic and sedation.

Starting at the top of the ear (hidden by the hair at this point) the incision courses down following the curves in front of the ear round the earlobe and up behind the ear for 1 cm. Using these incisions on both sides, the skin and deep tissues are remodelled and re-draped. The incisions are enclosed with stitches in front of the ear. Small drainage tubes are inserted underneath the skin during the operation and they are removed the day after the surgery. It is also usual for the surgeon to apply a head bandage in order to gently pressurise the incisions during the first post-operative night.

## After the Operation

Bandages are removed the morning after the surgery. The hair will be washed and then the patient can return home. Over the subsequent few days, you can gently wash your hair with a mild shampoo, obviously exercising care in the suture area.

It is important not to stoop or carry out vigorous activities for the first five days after the surgery otherwise post-operative bleeding can result. Patients are provided with written postoperative care instructions.

Any discomfort can be controlled by taking a mild analgesic such as Paracetamol (Aspirin must not be taken).

Sutures are usually removed seven days post-operatively. It is advisable not to apply any strong chemicals (bleach, ammonia etc) for four weeks following surgery.

Scars are usually very faint after a facelift. However, a period of thickening and reddening of the scars can be expected to last for a few months before returning to more natural skin colour and texture. Bruising, swelling and numbness are temporary following a facelift and are mostly resolved after two weeks. To help lessen the bruising, we suggest taking Arnica two weeks prior to surgery and two weeks after. Prolonged swelling and numbness are quite rare. Complications after facelift are rare. Should infection occur it is usually readily treated with antibiotics. If a haematoma (a collection of blood under the skin) should occur, a revisit to the operating theatre may be necessary. However, if dealt with promptly this does not affect the long-term results.

Occasionally, delayed wound healing may occur, mainly in diabetic patients or patients who smoke. Please discuss your smoking habit with your surgeon.

Damage to the nerves, which control the facial muscles, is an extremely rare event, which may be associated with a short scar facelift. Even if this should occur, in the majority of cases, there is a full recovery.

# Summary

A short scar facelift redefines the jaw line by lifting and smoothing out the sagging jowl. This is an extremely popular procedure, which refreshes the face, improves the contour and removes the heavy tired look.



Ms Angelica Kavouni FRCS EBOPRAS Cosmetic Plastic Surgeon graduated from the medical school of Thessaloniki, Greece and continued her postgraduate studies at the University of Bristol Medical School on a scholarship from the Erasmus European Institute.

She trained in Plastic Surgery in London NHS Hospitals; following her certification by the European Board of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery she specialised in Cosmetic Surgery as a fellow at London's Institute of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery – as seen in TV's 'Plastic Surgery School'

Two more years were then spent working as an associate cosmetic surgeon to Mr Jan Stanek of 'Ten Years Younger' fame.

GMC number: 4002006

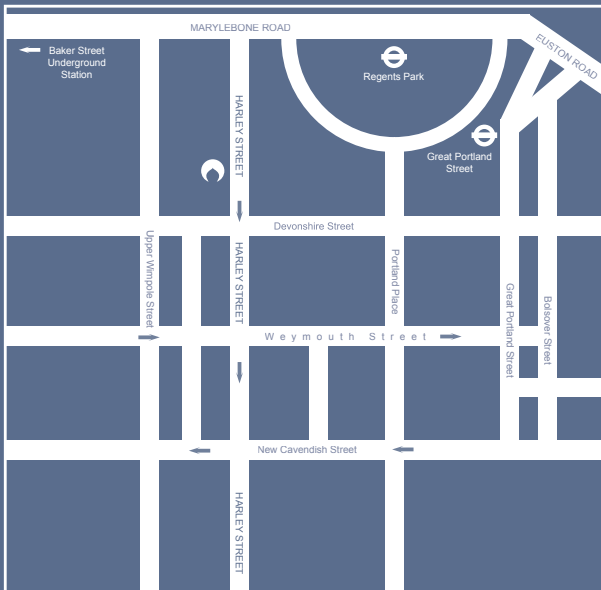
Angelica completed her doctoral thesis (MD) on growth hormone and wound healing for the University of Thessaloniki.

On the General Medical Council specialist register in Plastic Surgery her qualifications include:

- Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England FRCS
- Fellowship of the European Boards in Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery EBOPRAS
- Membership of the Hellenic and International Federation of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery IPRAS

Ms Kavouni holds a locum consultancy post at London's Chelsea and Westminster Hospital treating HIV related skin disorders.

Personal: Angelica is married to fellow Plastic Surgeon, Mr Lucian Ion and is the mother of two small boys.



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