

Information for Patients Undergoing Eyelid Surgery

In preparation for your surgery, it is important for you to understand how to take care of your surgical wounds. To facilitate healing, the wounds must be kept clean and moist. Your attention to optimal wound care will enhance the postoperative results, speed healing, and facilitate removal of the sutures.

- **What to Expect:**

- You may have some bloody drainage from the incision site(s) or blood-tinged tears in the first 24 hours. If your eye is patched, it is normal to see bloody drainage on the outside of the patch later in the day.
- Expect bruising and swelling, which differs with each person. Bruising on the eyelids may appear “red” the morning after surgery, which is normal. All bruising will descend below the eye a few days after surgery and will disappear in 1-2 weeks. Occasionally blood may be seen on the white of the eye or appear “bloodshot”, and this will also disappear over time.
- Expect swelling especially during the first 3-5 days. A small amount of swelling may persist for several weeks following surgery as your wounds continue the healing process. Although annoying, this is normal.
- Some itching is common after eyelid surgery and is part of the normal healing process.

- **Cold Application:**

- Cold application reduces swelling and relieves discomfort. Apply cold to the surgical sites for 20 to 30 minutes of each waking hour as instructed for the first 1-3 days after surgery. Use crushed ice or frozen peas in a quart size Ziplok bag covered with a dry washcloth for cold application.
- If you anticipate traveling a long distance home following your surgery, prepare by bringing an ice chest with a small amount of ice, Ziploc bags and dry wash cloths with you for use in traveling home. These items can be left in your car and will not be needed inside the surgery center.

- **Medications:**

- Apply the prescribed eye ointment sparingly to the suture line and in the eyes as your surgeon recommends following surgery. If your surgeon ordered eye drops in addition to ointment, for better absorption use prescription eye drops prior to using ointment. Ointment in your eye will likely blur your vision. Do *not* tug on surgically corrected eyelids to place the medication in the eye, but rather apply it to the rim of the lower eyelid and lay back momentarily to allow the ointment to melt into your eye.
- Use the prescription pain medication or Tylenol for discomfort following surgery. Follow prescription guidelines when taking pain medications and take with food to avoid a queasy stomach. Avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (e.g. Motrin, Advil, or Aleve) for 2 days after surgery.
- If you were prescribed a medication to treat nausea, take according to directions. It can also be taken along with the prescription pain medication to prevent nausea and allow you to rest better.
- If you were on blood thinning medication (e.g., Aspirin, Coumadin, Plavix, etc.) prior to surgery, you will be given specific instructions when to resume on the discharge instructions.
- Continue to take all of your other prescription medications or eye drops as you normally do.
- For “dry eye” sensation after surgery, your surgeon recommends any of the “over-the-counter” artificial tears (e.g. Celluvisc, Systane, Refresh Tears etc.). Do *not* use any of the “get the red out” drops such as Visine or Murine.

- **Personal Hygiene:**

- For most procedures you may shower 24 hours after surgery, gently cleaning your face with running water. If your surgeon requires you to wait longer, you will be given specific instructions on the discharge instructions. Use caution with soap and shampoo in the eye area the first few days following surgery.
- Do not apply eye make-up or concealer to cover bruises until approved by your surgeon.
- Do not wear contact lenses for 7 days.

- **Activity**

- Limit your activities for several days. Rest for the first 24 hours with your head elevated on 2-3 pillows, or by sitting in a recliner. Avoid aerobic exercise, heavy lifting or bending at the waist for 7 days unless your surgeon advises you otherwise. You may drive as your vision permits, but do not drive or drink alcoholic beverages when taking prescription pain medications. Your surgeon will determine when you are ready to return to work; this is usually delayed several days after surgery. Avoid prolonged sun exposure in the first few weeks following surgery while healing continues. Protect your eyes by wearing sun glasses and a brimmed hat. You may use sun block after the stitches are removed. If you need assistance choosing sun block or a hat, please let us know.

We hope your experience with us is positive. We welcome your feedback regarding the care you received. The entire staff at TOC Eye and Face would like to extend to you our best wishes for a rapid and comfortable recovery from your surgical procedure.

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