



Questions Following Surgery

Will I Have Pain?

Some discomfort is normal and expected following surgery. The first few days after surgery you may need to use prescription pain pills. Discomfort should gradually decrease and Tylenol or Advil should be sufficient to relieve pain. A foreign body sensation in the cornea (front) of the eye is very common and caused by sutures placed at surgery. These sutures will dissolve in one to two weeks. If the pain worsens, you should call the doctor.

Do I Need to Wear an Eye Patch?

For most patients the eye will be patched and shielded at the end of surgery. After the doctor has removed the patch on your first day following surgery, you do not need to wear an eye patch at home. However, you may be required to protect the operated eye by wearing a shield or glasses.

How Much Drainage Should I Have?

You may expect a moderate amount of drainage for a week. The drainage may be blood-tinged. Gradually the drainage should decrease. Eyelids can be cleaned with a clean washcloth and gentle soap or diluted baby shampoo. Wipe the eyelids gently from the nose outward. Some blood in tears is normal.

Will There Be Swelling?

Some swelling is normal for about a week or two after which it will gradually decrease. Using a clean washcloth and applying a cool compress for 5-10 minutes several times a day may reduce the swelling and make you more comfortable. People may have some swelling of both eyes, even if only one eye had surgery, especially if face down positioning is required. The white part of the eye may appear very red or bloody for a week or two. This may get worse a few days after surgery. Though the bright red appearance can look frightening, it is a normal finding early after surgery and will resolve in a few weeks.

Will I Need to Use Eye Drops?

You will be using several different kinds of eye drops or ointment (salve) when you leave the hospital/surgical center. The directions will be on each bottle or tube. The medication with the red top will keep your eye dilated and may make your eye more sensitive to light. Wearing sunglasses may help. The other medication is a combination antibiotic/steroid to prevent infection and promote healing. Occasionally a third drop is used to control the pressure in your eye. A new bottle of artificial tears or lubricant ointment may be used along with your prescription eye drops after surgery. **Bring all eye medications (drops, ointments, or pills) with you to each appointment.**

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Will I Need to Use Eye Drops? (continued)

Always wash your hands before putting in the eye drops. You may wish to have someone help you. Pull down on the lower lid and squeeze one drop from the bottle, being careful not to touch the dropper to your eye or lid. One drop is sufficient, but another may be used if the first did not go into the eye. It is often easier to put in the drops if you are reclining or lying down. Wait five (5) minutes after the first drop before using the second drop to allow the medications to absorb into the eye.

How Long Will It Take for My Vision to Improve?

Your vision should gradually improve, but it may take many months to regain your best vision. Frequently air or gas bubbles are injected into the eye at the time of surgery. This will blur your vision significantly at first. As the bubble becomes small it will cause a black line in your vision that moves as you move your head. As the bubble becomes smaller, you may notice that it looks more like a bubble or that it will break up into several smaller bubbles. It will take from a few days to a few weeks for the bubble to dissolve and be replaced by clear fluid.

You may notice floaters or double vision after your surgery. These symptoms usually decrease with time. If the double vision is bothersome, patching the eye may help.

If you notice a sudden worsening in your vision or loss of all vision, call your doctor.

Are There Any Physical Restrictions following Surgery?

If an air or gas bubble was placed in the eye during surgery, you may be asked to spend most of your time (both awake and during the night) with your head in a specific position, frequently face down. As the eye heals and the bubble dissolves there will be less of a need for you to stay in that specific position. You should avoid sleeping flat on your back until the bubble has totally dissolved and you have been given permission from your surgeon. You should not fly in an airplane or go to high altitudes in the mountains while there is a bubble in your eye. If you should require any other surgery under general anesthesia while you still have an air bubble in your eye, have your surgeon or anesthesiologist contact us prior to your surgery. Some anesthetic agents can make the bubble expand and seriously damage your eye.

Depending on the type of surgery, your doctor may recommend avoiding heavy lifting (greater than 50 pounds), swimming and contact sports for several weeks after surgery.

You may resume your usual sexual activities about one week after surgery.

When May I Return to Work? What May I Do?

Depending on the type of work you do, you may return to work within a few days. If your work involves physical activity or driving, you will need to restrict your activities and remain home longer.

You may watch TV, look at magazines or work puzzles. Reading may be uncomfortable for several days, but using the eyes will not cause any damage. You may go outside as usual. If conditions are windy or dusty, use sunglasses or an eye pad to avoid getting dust or dirt in the eye.

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Can I Travel?

You cannot fly in an airplane or drive into the mountains as long as the air or gas bubble remains in your eye.

When Can I Shower and Wash my Hair?

You may shower or bathe when you get home. You may want someone to help you shampoo your hair at first.

You may shave, brush your teeth or comb your hair. Do not use make-up, mascara or creams/lotions around the eye without your doctor's permission.

When Will I See the Doctor Again?

Generally you will be seen the first day after surgery and again 1-3 weeks later. If you have not received a return appointment before leaving the hospital/surgical center, you should call our office during business hours to arrange an appointment. If you will be seeing your local doctor instead of us, you will need to call that office to set up an appointment.

How Do I Reach a Doctor if I Have Concerns?

One of our doctors is available by calling 314-367-1181 or 1-800-888-0011.

After Normal Office Hours the Answering Service (314) 388-5500 will put you in touch with the doctor on call. Please try to call for routine questions and prescription refills during business hours.

You Should Call the Doctor if. . .

- * You notice a sudden decrease in your vision.
- * Have severe pain or pain increases rather than subsiding.
- * You notice a new black curtain in your eye that is different from the gas bubble.

If You Have Any of These Symptoms, You May Need to Be Examined.



Your Care After Surgery

1. Follow the post-operative procedures that the nurse went over with you and your companion.
2. After you have returned home, be sure to follow your doctor's orders regarding diet, rest and medication.
3. Call your surgeon if you have unusual symptoms or changes in your condition that you didn't expect.
4. Resume your normal diet. If general anesthesia was administered, start with clear liquids and proceed as tolerated to your normal diet.
5. It is not unusual to feel a little sleepy or dizzy for several hours after surgery. REST AND PAMPER YOURSELF.
6. The day of surgery, **DON'T**
 - **DRIVE**
 - **SMOKE**
 - **OPERATE MACHINERY**
 - **COOK**
 - **MAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS OR SIGN ANY LEGAL DOCUMENTS**