

Taking Care of Yourself After Your Operation

- ***Cool compresses are your friend for the first three days after surgery***

It helps to control bruising, swelling and pain to place cool or cold packs over the surgical site 15-20 minutes at a time every hour on the day you have surgery. For three days after that you should apply the compresses at least 3-4 times per day. Suitable compresses include: gauze bandages or a clean washcloth soaked in ice water and wrung dry, commercially-available cold packs, or bagged frozen vegetables from your freezer. If the cold is uncomfortable, allow the compress to warm at room temperature for a few minutes.

- ***It is common for there to be oozing blood from the wound the first twenty four hours after surgery***

You may notice blood on your cold compress bandages or a trickle of blood from the wound the day and day after your surgery. A steady stream of blood can be treated by placing firm pressure over a clean washcloth directly on the wound for 5 minutes. This may be repeated one time. If bleeding persists, please call the doctor immediately. Sleeping on several pillows and keeping your head above the level of your heart may help minimize bleeding. You might consider sleeping on an old (but clean) pillowcase for the first few nights after surgery to avoid staining your “good” bed linens.

- ***Place a ribbon of ointment (given to you at the hospital) on your stitches once before bedtime and once each morning for one week. Place a dollop of this same ointment on the eye itself once before bedtime for one week.***

The ointment will help keep your stitches moist and clean. Placing it on the eye (or pulling the lower lid down and placing a bead on the moist inside pink part and then blinking) before bedtime will keep the eye moist overnight. It may cause your vision to be blurred but this is usually not a problem by the next morning when you awake. If you have a bandage in place, Dr. Fountain will advise you when to remove the bandage and start the application of ointment as above.

- ***In most cases, you may shower and wash your hair the day after surgery. Keep your stitches clean.***

Avoid a direct stream of water on the wound and be very gentle washing around the stitches. You may find clotted flecks of dried blood clinging to your stitches. These can be very uncomfortable and will make suture removal more difficult. To remove these crusts, soak the stitches with a moist washcloth for several minutes, then with a Q-tip, gently flake the crust off. Vigorous rubbing may break the very fragile stitches.

- ***If you have had surgery on both eyes, it is not uncommon for one side to be more bruised, swollen or droopy than the other during the first 2 weeks after surgery.***

There are many factors that can cause temporary differences in the way the eyelids look. Do not be alarmed by this. While absolute symmetry and perfection cannot be guaranteed, in almost all cases the eyes heal in a very balanced fashion when surgery is performed on both sides.

- ***You can resume most activity the day after surgery.***

It is advisable to start moving around the day after surgery but strenuous aerobic activity and heavy lifting or straining should be avoided for 5 days after your operation.

- ***If you are taking eye medications for other conditions, you should continue those after surgery***

If you take an eye drop near bedtime, wait at least 5 minutes after placing the drop in your eye before applying any ointment given for your surgery.

- ***Avoid the use of make-up, lotions, powders or creams around your stitches for 10 days after surgery***
- ***Contact lenses should be avoided for 2 weeks after surgery in most cases***