



After Eye Surgery

Patient care instructions

This handout details what to expect and care instructions for after eye surgery, steps for putting in eye drops or ointment, and when to call the doctor or nurse, if needed.

Taking Care of Your Eye After Surgery

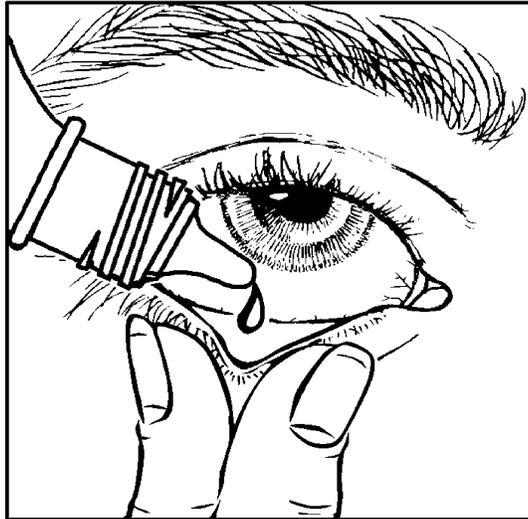
- If you were wearing a metal eye shield for protection while you were in the hospital, the most important thing you can do is prevent your eye from getting bumped.
- To help protect your eye during the night and when napping, wear your shield without an eye pad.
- During the day, your shield can be removed and you may use your glasses for protection.

What to Expect After Eye Surgery

- **Blurred vision** – that will improve with time. Your clearest vision will come after the eye has healed enough to prescribe new glasses, which are not prescribed until at least 1 month after surgery.
- **Scratchy feeling** – like something is in your eye.
- **Sensitivity** – to bright light. Sunglasses will help if this is a problem.
- **Swelling** – that will be mild and may also include redness of the eye and eyelids.

When Using Eye Drops or Ointment

1. Wash your hands with soap and water. Rinse and dry thoroughly.
2. Look up over the top of your head with BOTH EYES OPEN.
3. Pull your lower lid down while keeping your hand steady on your forehead.
4. Put a drop of medicine in the sac behind your lower lid.



Applying eye drops.

5. The tip of the dropper or ointment tube should not touch the eyeball itself.
6. Do not use more than 1 eye medicine at a time. Wait 5 minutes between medicines. If you are using both drops and ointment, use the ointment **AFTER** the drops.

If you put in your own drops, it may be easier to lie down. Ask a family member or friend to check and see if you are actually getting the eye medication into your eye. A mirror may be helpful if you are doing this alone.

Call Your Doctor or Nurse If You Notice:

- Any sudden onset of eye pain.
- An increase in swelling, redness or discharge from the eye.
- A decrease in the clearness of vision in the operated eye, as compared to your vision in the operated eye on the day of discharge from the hospital.
- Nausea, vomiting, aching eye pain (with or without headaches), especially on the day of surgery or in the first several days after surgery. If you have any of these symptoms, call your surgeon right away since they may be related to your surgery.

If any of these symptoms occur:

- Call the Eye Center at **206-598-4011** during the day.
- Or call the paging operator at **206-598-6190** and ask for the ophthalmologist on call.
- If you are not able to reach the doctor on call, University of Washington Medical Center Emergency Department will help you. Their number is **206-598-4000**.

Questions?

Call 206-598-4011

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC Clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

Eye Center:
206-598-4011

Follow These Tips

It is important that you do nothing that will interfere with the healing of your eye. Your common sense will generally tell you what activities might put too much strain on your eye. To protect your eye and promote healing, follow these dos and don'ts:

Do:

- Resume taking any drugs prescribed to you before your operation, including aspirin and anticoagulants.
- Take showers or baths. It is OK to shampoo your hair, but avoid getting soap or shampoo in your eye.
- Watch television or read. These activities will not damage your eye.
- Do light household chores.
- Return to sedentary employment within 1 week and to manual labor employment 1 month after surgery.
- Ask a family member or friend to drive you to your appointment on the day after surgery.
- Take over-the-counter medications and let your doctor know if you have problems with coughing, vomiting or constipation.

Don't:

- Bump the operated eye.
- Rub your eye.
- Bend over in the direction of your feet. If you must pick something up, bend your knees and keep your head above your shoulders. Learn to tie your shoelaces, put on your socks or stockings, etc. without bending over.
- Strain by trying to pull on difficult garments or lifting or pushing heavy objects. Do not lift objects heavier than 10 pounds for the first 3 to 4 weeks after surgery.
- Participate in strenuous activities or contact sports until your doctor tells you to resume all normal activities.

Your Follow-up Visits

After surgery, it is important to protect your eye, keep your scheduled follow-up appointments, and follow all of your doctor's care instructions. Follow-up visits are usually required the day after surgery, a week after surgery, and a month after surgery.

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