



Eyelid Surgery: Blepharoplasty

What to expect and how to prepare for your operation

As we age, gravity affects our bodies, including the skin around our eyes. Some people show these changes earlier in life, and in some, the changes are more noticeable. Heaviness around the eyes can makes us look tired. In some people it may even cause vision problems. These are some reasons why someone may choose to have an eyelid operation.

***Blepharoplasty* is surgery to remove extra skin and fat from the upper and lower eyelids. This handout explains what to expect, how to prepare for your operation, and how to plan for your recovery.**

Remember:

Do not take any aspirin or other products that affect blood clotting for 1 week before your operation.

How to Prepare for Your Operation

Things to Remember

- Do **not** take any aspirin or other products that affect blood clotting for 1 week before your operation. Two of these are ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and naprosyn (Aleve, Naproxen). See attached sheet for more information.
- Do not shave any part of your body that you do not already shave every day. If you normally shave near your surgical site, do **not** shave that area for 2 days (48 hours) before your surgery.
- Make plans for an adult to drive you home from the hospital and stay with you the first evening.
- You cannot drive yourself or take a taxi home alone from the hospital.

24 Hours Before Your Operation

- **Take 2 showers:** Take 1 shower the night before, and a second shower the morning of your operation. Use the antibacterial soap your nurse gave you to wash your body.

Do **not** use the antibacterial soap on your face and hair. (See directions that came with the soap.) Use your own soap and shampoo on your face and hair. Use clean towels to dry off, and put on clean clothing.

- **Arrival time:** The pre-surgery nurse will call you by 5 p.m. the night before your operation. If you are having surgery on a Monday, the nurse will call you the Friday before. If you do not hear from the pre-surgery nurse by 5 p.m., please call 206-598-6334.

The pre-surgery nurse will tell you when to come to the hospital and will remind you:

- Not to eat or drink after a certain time.
 - Which of your regular medicines to take or not take.
 - To sip only enough water to swallow your pills.
- **Heating blanket:** To reduce your risk of infection, you will be covered with a heating blanket to warm your body while you wait to go into the operating room. Ask for a heating blanket if you do not receive one.

After Your Operation

Precautions and Self-Care to Speed Recovery

Medicine given during and after your operation will affect you. For 24 hours after your surgery do **not**:

- Drive, or travel alone.
- Use machinery.
- Drink alcohol.
- Sign any legal papers, or be responsible for the care of another person.

Incision Care

Apply the antibiotic ointment to your incisions 2 times a day until your stitches are removed.

To Lessen Swelling

- Sleep upright with your head elevated in a lounge chair position for 3 days.
- Apply cool compresses or bags of frozen peas to your eyes for the first 48 hours. This will lessen pain and swelling. Apply no longer than 15 minutes at a time, or less if numbness occurs. Do not reapply until your tissue returns to its normal temperature. Be sure to place a clean towel or cloth around the bag of peas to protect your skin.

Removing Stitches

Your stitches will need to be removed 5 days after your operation, unless your surgeon used dissolving stitches. Call 206-598-4477 to make your appointment.

Activity

You may walk and do other daily activities. For 2 weeks after your operation:

- Do **not** bend your head below your waist.
- Do **not** lift anything heavier than a phone book (5 pounds).
- Avoid all activities that would raise your heart rate or cause you to strain.

Shower

You may shower 48 hours after your operation.

For 2 weeks after your operation, avoid all activities that cause you to strain.

Questions?

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., call the Surgical Specialties Nurse Advice Line at 206-598-4549.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the resident on call for Plastic Surgery to be paged.

Or, ask for your surgeon to be paged:

Dr. _____

Pain Management

You can take extra-strength Tylenol or the pain medicine that your doctor prescribed for you.

Return to Work

Usually people take 2 weeks off work to recover. The swelling around your eyes will ease within that time. You may still have bruising of the skin below your eyes 2 weeks after your operation. If this occurs, makeup should hide it.

Call the Nurse Advice Line or Your Doctor If You Have:

- Bleeding or drainage that soaks your dressing.
- A fever higher than 100.5°F (38°C).
- Shaking and chills.
- Any sign of infection in your incision:
 - Redness
 - Increasing pain
 - Swelling
 - Foul-smelling drainage
 - A change in the type or amount of drainage
- Nausea and/or vomiting.
- Concerns that cannot wait until your follow-up visit.

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