

Postoperative Instructions After Lid Surgery

- ***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 while awake (don't wake up during the night to do this) for the first 48 hours after 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, or commercially-available cold packs. If the cold is uncomfortable, allow the compress to warm at room temperature for a few minutes or wrap the cold compresses in a clean wash cloth or thin towel.

- ***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 eye ointment on your stitches once before bedtime and once each morning for one week. If your surgery is in the hospital, you will be given the ointment to take home. If your surgery is in the office, you will be advised to purchase your ointment ahead of time and bring with you the day of your procedure.***

Place a dollop of this same ointment on the eye itself (if directed by Dr. Fountain) 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.

- ***After surgery, you may take all other medications you may have been on before surgery, including all eye drops, as you normally would.***

The once exception to this is aspirin or clopidogrel (Plavix). You should generally refrain from restarting these blood thinners until 48 hours after surgery. You may restart them then as long as there is no active bleeding from your wound.

- ***For pain or ocular discomfort in the first days after surgery, you may use acetaminophen (Tylenol) and/or over-the-counter rewetting drops.***

It is very rare to need narcotic pain control after your surgery. Pain on the day of surgery can almost always be managed with acetaminophen (Tylenol) and cold compresses. Avoid Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Anacin, Ecotrin or Naprosyn as these are all slight blood thinners and may worsen your bruising and swelling. It is uncommon to need any pain relief the day after your surgery. Pain or irritation of the eyes usually responds to lubrication with over-the-counter tear drops. You may use these as often as you like. Avoid “get-the-red-out” drops as these have active ingredients that may not be good for your eye.

- ***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 (if not using dissolvable sutures) 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. When showering, try to avoid a direct stream of water into the wound. Rinse shampoo, when possible, down your back and not over your face.

- ***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. Sleeping on an extra pillow or semi-upright in a recliner may help minimize bruising and swelling but a good night's sleep is more important than a little less bruising. Only change your sleeping position if you can still sleep soundly.

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

It is advisable to start moving around the day after surgery but strenuous exercise, bending, heavy lifting or straining should be avoided for 7 days after your operation. These activities can cause bleeding and separation of the wound. You may drive as your vision permits and go about normal activities like reading, watching television, going up and down stairs in your house or walking the dog.

- ***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 using drops right after ointment as the drops will work well with ointment on the eye.

- ***Avoid the use of make-up, lotions, powders or creams around your stitches for 10 days after surgery***

Do not apply mascara, eyeliner or eye shadow on your lids for 10 days

after surgery as the color can seep into the suture holes giving you a permanent tattoo. You may use moisturizers away from the stitches if you like. After 7 days, concealer may be applied to bruising that may sometimes be seen on the cheeks.

- ***Contact lenses should be avoided for 10 days after surgery in most cases***

Avoid tugging on your wounds when putting in and taking out your lenses. Avoid use of contacts when applying ointment in and around the eyes to avoid damaging the lenses.

- ***Avoid prolonged exposure of your incision lines to the sun for 6 weeks after surgery***

Sun exposure may darken scars though this is usually not permanent. You may use sunblock on your lids (avoid getting in your eyes) after the wounds have healed but this is usually not necessary. A wide-brimmed hat and/or UV-protection sunglasses are all that most people need to protect your wounds from the sun's harmful rays.

Do not hesitate to have Dr. Fountain paged with any of the following:

- Loss of vision not due to dressing or ointment
- Bleeding that cannot be controlled by pressure
- Rapid onset of painful swelling around stitches
- Any evidence of infection such as colored discharge
- Fever > 101F
- Nausea or vomiting

If you need Dr. Fountain after office hours, please call 847-945-6770, and leave a message for the doctor on call. Otherwise call the office, at 847-945-6770, during regular hours and ask for her coordinator, if Dr. Fountain is not available.

If you are experiencing any of the above, and feel it is an emergency, go directly to the nearest hospital.