

The following instructions are designed to answer questions that may arise regarding post-operative care and tell you what you can do and what you should not do during your convalescence. You and your family should read them several times to become thoroughly familiar with them.

Attempt to follow instructions faithfully –those who do generally have the smoothest post-operative course. Whenever a question arises in your mind, refer back to this information. If you do not find the answer to your question, telephone us.

SWELLING AND DISCOLORATION

As you were told before surgery, a varying amount of temporary swelling and discoloration follows this procedure, so try not to become anxious – it will pass. We try to keep these symptoms to a minimum by prescribing medications to be taken before your surgery and by using meticulous surgical techniques.

AFTER YOUR OPERATION:

You can help normal healing to occur several ways:

1. Continue to take the antibiotic given to you until your supply is exhausted; the prescription need not be refilled.
2. Sleep with your head elevated 30 to 40 degrees for one week; use an additional pillow or two under your mattress, if necessary.
3. Apply ice compresses made of face towels (not an ice bag) to your eyes for twenty-minute periods every two hours while awake during the first three days after surgery.
4. STAY UP (sitting, standing, walking around) as much as possible after you return home –this is important! Of course, you should rest when you tire.
5. Avoid bending over or lifting heavy things for one week. In addition to aggravating swelling, this may raise the blood pressure and start bleeding.
6. Avoid straining at stool, which also raises the blood pressure. If you feel you need a laxative get CORRECTOL from your pharmacist (no prescription required).
7. Avoid hitting or bumping your face and eyes. It is wise not to pick up small children.
8. Avoid excessive sunning of the face for prolonged periods during the first 30 days following operation; ordinary exposure is not harmful.
9. Don't tweeze your eyebrows for two weeks.
10. You may have your hair washed at a salon or wash it gently yourself twenty-four hours after your first set of sutures are removed. Use only a hand held blow dryer set at a cool or warm temperature.
11. Tub bathing or showering can be resumed the day after surgery, but avoid getting the eyes wet. The face may be gently cleansed with cotton pads.
12. Do not resume exercising, running, aerobics, or nautilus for two weeks after surgery.

YOUR MEDICATIONS

You were given several medications and prescriptions before the operation.

One prescription will be for pain. It should be filled only if the cold compresses do not suffice because pain-relievers usually cause sensations of dizziness or drowsiness and make recovery more tedious. Don't use aspirin or ibuprofen, or pain relievers containing aspirin or ibuprofen, as they may cause bleeding. Tylenol may be used if other pain relievers are not readily available.

BLEEDING

If bleeding occurs, go to bed, elevate the head, apply cold compresses over the eyes, and have someone report it to us by telephone. You will probably be told to report to our office or to the hospital.

TEMPERATURE

Generally, the body temperature does not rise much above 100 degrees following eyelid surgery, and this rise is due to dehydration caused by insufficient intake of fluids. People often think they have an increased temperature because they feel warm, when, in reality, they do not. To be sure, measure your temperature with a thermometer.

Report any persistent temperature over 100 degrees.

RESUMING ACTIVITIES

1. You may wear a wig or hair piece as soon as you desire.
2. Do not apply hair coloring until two weeks have elapsed following your operation.
3. No swimming, gym or strenuous athletic activity for 2 weeks; no diving or water skiing for 2 months.
No contact sports for two months.
4. You may begin wearing eye glasses or sunglasses the day following surgery. Contact lenses may be worn one week after surgery.
5. Eye shadow or false eyelashes should not be applied until ten days after surgery.
6. You can camouflage the discoloration about the eyes with any RETOUCH COVER CREAM (two shades darker than your skin color) before you come to the office to get your first set of sutures removed. Bring it near the line of incision, but do not apply over the incisions themselves until several days after the sutures have been removed. The following technique of application seems best: First, smear a layer over the entire discolored area; then, apply more with a "patting" motion; finally, blend the edges with the surrounding skin.
7. You should probably not plan to return to work until four or five days, or perhaps a week, after your surgery. Even then, it might be wise to procure sunglasses with large frames unless you don't mind becoming the center of attention.

YOUR FIRST POST OPERATIVE OFFICE VISIT

Soon after arriving home you should call the office for an appointment because special preparations that are different from the usual office routine must be made prior to your visit.

Don't build up a feeling of fear and anxiety about what is going to be done to you during this visit. A few skin sutures will be removed with special delicate instruments which minimize discomfort. The incisions will be greatly cleansed, and you will probably feel much better.

ABOUT SOME POTENTIALLY UPSETTING, BUT RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT, THINGS THAT MIGHT OCCUR DURING THE HEALING PERIOD:

1. Swelling may persist somewhat longer than usual. However, we have never yet encountered a case wherein it didn't ultimately subside. The same is true of discoloration.
2. Swelling and discoloration become more pronounced after some patients leave the hospital; this is why you should follow the instructions given above to minimize swelling and not take any medications containing aspirin. Furthermore, if you have nasal allergy or "sinus trouble", you should take antihistamines to decongest your nose as this may be a contributing factor.
3. Rarely, the whites of one or both eyes may become partially discolored. This is painless, will not harm vision, and absorbs eventually.
4. Occasionally, the swelling will cause the lower lid to be separated from the eyeball proper. This condition will be reversed as the swelling subsides but can be prolonged if face powder granules, etc., become deposited in the area when cosmetics are being applied.
5. During the first several days following surgery, the scars will be imperceptible; then, they go through a period of slight swelling and, perhaps, reddening; later, this subsides, and they become virtually imperceptible again. This is the way normal scars mature. Thus, any unevenness of the edges of the incisions or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary and will subside with the passage of time. Cosmetics or cortisone creams may be used to minimize the problem while the progressive evolution is occurring.
6. Occasionally, small cysts which resemble ordinary "whiteheads" will appear beside the upper lid incisions; like whiteheads, they will disappear after their contents are expressed in the office. They may also occur in the lower lids, but less frequently than in the uppers.
7. Patients often experience some blurring of vision for two or three days after the operation. This is generally due to swelling and/or ointments that have been used during the operation and will clear spontaneously.

If you have further questions, call us at (415) 392-9800.