

Information for Patients

Following Cataract Surgery

What to expect on the day of your operation

You should rest quietly for the remainder of the day.

Your face, forehead, and cheek may feel numb following your anaesthetic. This is normal and will wear off gradually.

You may feel some discomfort following your operation and for a few days afterwards. Taking a mild pain relief medicine, for example Paracetamol, will help. **If you are already taking pain relief medication for a different condition continue with these, but do not take both.**

If you have any change or sudden loss in vision, severe pain, nausea, or vomiting, please contact the hospital on the telephone numbers given overleaf.

Do not remove your eye dressing until the morning after your operation. If the dressing falls off, wash the plastic cover thoroughly with warm soapy water and dry with a clean towel. Replace the plastic cover over your eye using tape to secure it.

It is normal for your eye to water and for tears to be blood stained for 2-3 days. However, if you have had stitches in your eye these symptoms may last for approximately 1 week. It is normal to experience a pricking sensation.

General instructions following your operation

If there is oozing, wipe your cheek with a clean tissue. Use the tissue only once and throw it away.

You can read, watch television, and go outdoors. Although it is not necessary to cover your eye, you may find bright light uncomfortable. If this is the case, shield your eyes with sunglasses.

Please do not rub or touch your eye. Wear the plastic cover provided over your eye whilst in bed for 2 weeks. This will protect your eye during sleep.

You may wash your face and hair but avoid getting soap into your eyes.

Take care when bending as you may misjudge distances and bump your eye on furniture, for example.

You should ask the Doctor when you could return to work, as this will depend upon your occupation.

Returning to driving will depend upon your vision. We normally advise that patients wait until their post-operative review appointment at 4 weeks before they start driving, however, you are legally able to drive as soon as your vision meets the DVLA driving standard. Before resuming driving, you will need to be fully recovered from your surgical procedure. You should also be free from the distracting effect of pain, or the sedative or other effects of any pain relief medication you are taking to be able to concentrate fully on driving.

Ultimately, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are in control of the vehicle at all times. If you are in any doubt you should book an examination at your own opticians to confirm you meet the DVLA standards.

At your next appointment, you will be examined and advised when you can have your eyes tested for new glasses. In the meantime, you can wear your original glasses if comfortable or an older pair. Some patients feel better without wearing their glasses until they have a new pair made up. If in doubt, ask your optician

How to do your first eye dressing

Follow this procedure on waking the day after your operation

- Thoroughly wash and dry your hands.
- Remove your plastic eye cover and any dressings covering your eye. Keep the plastic eye cover and throw away the remainder.
- Wash the plastic eye cover in warm soapy water and store it in a dry place. The plastic eye cover must be worn whilst in bed, for two weeks. Replace the eye cover using tape to secure it.

- Each morning pour cooled boiled water into a small clean container and then use this to clean your eyelids.
- Wash and dry your hands again.
- Clean your eyelids from the inside corner, (near your nose) outwards, using clean cotton wool or tissues dipped into the water. Use fresh cotton wool or tissue each time you wipe.
- Put in your eye drops or ointment as you have been shown.
- Avoid touching any part of your eye with the dropper to avoid contamination of the drops or injury to the eye. Make sure the dropper lid is placed on a clean surface.
- Hold your head back; with the dropper bottle in one hand and with the fingers of the other hand gently pull the lower eyelid to form a gap.
- Squeeze the dropper bottle so that one drop goes into the pouch created between the eyeball and the lower eyelid. You may find that the drops sting; this is normal.
- Close your eye gently and keep it closed for a slow count of 60. This will allow the drops time to start working.
- Wipe any liquid that did not go into the eye with a clean tissue.
- If you are having more than one type of drop, they will be labelled A, B, C, etc. This is the order they should be used in. Leave at least 5 minutes between each drop.
- Replace bottle lid immediately after use and store the drops as instructed as this may vary.
- Keep the eye clean. If the lids are sticky, clean them using cotton wool balls and cooled boiled water.
- If you lose or run out of your drops before the end of your treatment, get more from your General Practitioner. Once opened the drops can be kept for 4 weeks and then must be thrown away.

Please follow these directions carefully, they are very important. Keep using your drops as you have been told. Always wash your hands thoroughly before and after using your drops and advise friends or relatives to do the same if they are putting your drops or ointment in for you.

Reducing the risk of infection

- It is essential that strict attention is paid to hand washing and personal hygiene and that your fingernails are clean at all times following your operation.
- It is advisable that you use anti-bacterial soap for 3-4 weeks following surgery to wash your hands and face which is available from supermarkets and pharmacy stores.
- It is recommended that **re-usable handkerchiefs should not be used at all after surgery**. Disposable tissues **only** are advised.
- It is essential that eye make-up is **not worn** until all drops have been discontinued and you have been discharged by your doctor/optometrist.

The above advice is not meant to offend you. It is essential that attention is paid to strict personal hygiene in order to prevent and to help reduce the risk of infection on your behalf.

Your post-operative care

After your operation we will advise you when you will be reviewed by a doctor or optometrist depending on your surgeons' plan. This will usually be around 4 weeks after surgery, but occasionally you may need to return to the hospital earlier and on more than one occasion.

You should contact the hospital on the numbers below if

- You have excessive pain or severe headache with nausea or vomiting.
- You have a sudden loss of or reduction in your vision.
- Your eye becomes very sticky.
- Your eye and/or eyelid becomes redder, swollen, or itchy after using your drops.

Eye J Day Case Unit: (0161) 701 2909 Monday to Friday 7.30 am -8.00pm.

If the department above is closed and you require emergency treatment, you can contact the Emergency Eye Department which is open from 8.00am to 8.00pm every day. Outside of these hours please contact Ward 55 open 24 hours every day. These departments can be contacted via the hospital switchboard on (0161) 276 1234 asking to be put through to the Emergency Eye Department or the ward.

Following discharge from the hospital if you have any worries, you can get help from your own General Practitioner. If you are between outpatient appointments and are worried please contact your consultant's secretary Monday - Friday 9.00 am - 5.00 pm via the hospital switchboard on **(0161) 276 1234** asking for your consultants secretary.

