

Information for Patients

Before and After Evisceration

What is an evisceration?

An evisceration is an operation to remove the contents of the eye to leave only the sclera (the white part of the eye). This operation is usually performed under a general anaesthetic although it can be performed under local anaesthetic with sedation in some cases. The reasons for performing this surgery will have been discussed with you in clinic.

Will I have an implant?

After the contents of the affected eye have been removed the surgeon could decide to replace the reduced socket size by inserting an orbital implant during the surgery. The choice of implant will be discussed with you prior to surgery as part of the consent process.

The two main types of implants are:

- **Baseball** – A spherical implant made of plastic is placed in the socket and the existing sclera (white of the eye) is stitched over this.
- **Hydroxyapatite** – The hydroxyapatite implant or HAI is a spherical implant. It is made from coral (or a manmade equivalent) which resembles human bone, and will not easily be rejected by the body. The implant is full of tiny interconnecting tunnels through which blood vessels and tissues of the socket can grow.

In some cases it is not beneficial to use any implant at all and the remaining contents of the socket are left to heal of their own accord.

How long will the dressings stay in place?

After the operation, you will be required to wear an eye pad and bandage for one week. This helps to reduce the swelling caused by surgery. The dressing will be removed in clinic. A small clear plastic shell called a conformer is inserted behind your eyelids at the time of surgery. The conformer is used to reduce contraction and scarring of the socket, as well as making the socket more comfortable. It also gives the eyelids a more natural shape.

When the dressing is removed, the nurse will explain more about the conformer. At the time of surgery your eyelids might be stitched together. This is to keep any swelling under control. These stitches will be removed 2-3 weeks following your operation.

Immediate care after your operation

Following evisceration surgery you will be given pain killers to help control any pain and antibiotics to take for one week to help reduce the risk of infection. You will need to be aware and monitor your wound for any signs of infection (although very rare) these include:

- Sudden onset of pain
- Redness in the eyelids or surrounding skin
- Swelling that looks 'angry' and red
- Any discharge
- General feeling unwell, raised temperature

If you think you have any of these symptoms and are worried, then either contact your GP or the oculoplastic team at the Manchester Royal Eye Hospital immediately on the numbers at the end of this leaflet.

Will the operation be painful?

There will inevitably be some discomfort. Most patients do not experience much pain after the first 24 - 48 hours; however, some patients will experience more severe and prolonged pain. The pain is controlled with painkillers. Pain is usually associated with eye movement and can be reduced by moving your head rather than your eyes which limits your eye movements. Using a few pillows to elevate your head at night might also help to reduce pain.

Are there any risks involved with this operation?

There is a risk associated with any operation. There are risks associated with general anaesthesia which are common to all operations. The main risks with this type of surgery include the risk of infection, bleeding, and breakdown of the wound. Such complications are, however, rarely encountered.

How long will I be in hospital?

Usually patients are admitted on the day of surgery and discharged home the following day, occasionally some patients can go home the same day. If the effects of the general anaesthetic are causing nausea and vomiting a further night's stay might be advised.

How long will it be before I get my artificial eye?

The socket will require time to heal, if it is satisfactory after 8 weeks the ocularist can begin to make your artificial eye. Your artificial eye will be made and fitted by the ocularist in the Ocular Prosthetic Department. The ocularist will advise you on the time scale for this, and this will depend on your progress and the demands on the service.

Before your operation, the ocularist will try to meet with you and explain the process involved in making the artificial eye and answer any outstanding questions that you might have. If you have any problems or questions the ocularist can be contacted on **(0161) 276 5540 Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm.**

When can I return to work?

You will not be able to return to work until you are feeling well in yourself. We suggest that you take at least 2-3 weeks off work.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of this information please telephone the hospital switchboard on **(0161) 276 1234** and ask them to bleep the Oculoplastic Nurse Practitioner on 5235 or 5605 **Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm** or Ward 55, available 24 hours a day.