

# Blepharoplasty (Eyelid surgery) Post-Operative Instructions

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## What supplies do I need to buy before the procedure?

- Ophthalmic (eye) antibiotic ointment (will receive in recovery room after surgery)
- Q-tips®
- Hydrogen Peroxide 3%
- Tylenol® (acetaminophen)
- Ice Packs
  - You may make some at home, please see the handout “How do I make an Ice Pack?” or visit <http://careguides.med.umich.edu> and search “How do I Make an Ice Pack?”
  - If you purchase them, buy the gel variety and make sure they are lightweight)

## How should I prepare for surgery?

- Stop smoking cigarettes 6 weeks before surgery.
- Stop chewing tobacco 4 weeks before surgery.
- No alcohol 24 hours before surgery.
- Stop all anti-aging products around the eyes (Retin-A/tretinoin) 1 week before surgery

## What are my post-operative instructions?

### General guidelines:

- If you have IV anesthesia you will need someone to drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.

- Follow a balanced diet.
- Exercising less may lead to constipation, so you may want to add raw fruit to your diet, and drink more fluids.
- Even when not taking pain medications, avoid alcohol for 3 weeks after surgery. Alcohol causes fluid to build-up in your body.
- Do not smoke. Smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

### **Medications:**

Tylenol<sup>®</sup> (acetaminophen) may be enough for your pain. If you receive a narcotic (opioid) pain medication:

- Take it as prescribed with food to avoid upset stomach.
- Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin, unless approved by your surgeon.
- **Do not take opioid pain medication at the same time as Tylenol (acetaminophen)** because most narcotics also contain acetaminophen. It is important that you **do not exceed 4g (4000mg) of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period.**
  - If you have a liver condition it may be less than 4g, follow your provider's instructions.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages, operate machinery, or drive a car while taking narcotic (opioid) pain medications.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these supplements as tolerated.

### **What should my activity level be?**

- Start walking as soon as possible. This helps reduce swelling, lowers the chance of blood clots and pneumonia and lowers the risk of constipation.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any prescribed pain medications (narcotics/opioids).

- In general, it is okay to return to work in 5-7 days, though please follow any individualized restrictions that your surgeon discusses with you
- Avoid the following for 7 days after surgery:
  - Lifting heavy objects (over 10 pounds)
  - Bending at the waist
- Avoid activities that raise your blood pressure, such as vigorous sports that can cause overheating for 2 weeks.
- Avoid swimming, hot tubs, and saunas for 3 weeks

**Other instructions for 24-48 hours after surgery:**

- You may shower 24 hours after surgery. (Incision may get wet in the shower but do not constantly have the shower water run directly on the incision.)
  - Blot dry the incisions after your shower. Do not wipe. (As the incisions are healing, they can be accidentally opened.)
  - Use warm water only.
- Keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows while sleeping for the first 2 nights after surgery. You may want to sleep in a recliner.
- Use ice packs the first 48 hours after surgery to decrease swelling. (Please refer to ice pack hand out described on page 1).
- Do not use any essential oils on incision.

**Other instructions for 3-7 days after surgery:**

- Clean the upper eyelid incision with half peroxide and half water three times per day for 3 days and then switch to soap and water. Do not get solution in the eye. (Remember to use good hand-washing technique before doing any wound care.)
- After each cleaning please apply the ophthalmic (eye) antibiotic ointment (that you receive in recovery room after surgery) to the upper and lower eye lid incisions to help soften crusts for 6 days.
- Keep incisions open to air.

### **Other instructions for 2 weeks-1 year after surgery:**

- Avoid wearing contact lens for 2 weeks after surgery.
- You may use make-up and sunblock after 3 weeks once the incision is totally closed, healed and pink.
- You may use anti-aging products around the eyes (Retin-A/tretinoin) 1 month after surgery.
- Do not use any essential oils on incision.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock if sun exposure is unavoidable. (SPF 50 or greater).

### **What should I expect the eyelid to look like?**

- The morning of the second day will show the most swelling and discoloration. It is not unusual for one eye to be more swollen or discolored than the other is.
- The following are all normal concerns and will go away with full healing:
  - Watery eyes
  - Burning
  - Tightness
  - Itching
  - Tingling
  - Puffiness
  - Red and bumpy incision lines
- A slight amount of bloody drainage from the incision is normal. If you have fresh, red blood that saturates more than one gauze dressing pad every 10-20 minutes, please contact the clinic.
- If you have non-dissolvable sutures they will be removed in 5-10 days.
- Dissolvable sutures dissolve anywhere in the span of 10 days to 3 weeks.

### **What follow-up care will I receive?**

Follow-up visits will be scheduled at the discretion of your surgeon.

## **When should I call my doctor?**

**Call you doctor if you notice any of the symptoms below:**

- Increased swelling or bruising.
- Worsening swelling and redness that persist after a few days.
- Increased redness along the incision.
- Severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- Any side effects to medications including:
  - Rash
  - Vomiting
  - Nausea
  - Diarrhea
  - Headache
- Oral temperature over 101 degrees.
- Yellowish or greenish liquid from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- Bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- Loss of feeling or motion.

**In the event of life-threatening bleeding, call 911 or go to the emergency department.**

## **What is the contact information?**

- Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 5:00pm:
  - Call: (734) 432-7634 for patients of Dr. Brenner, Dr. Moyer, Dr. Rudy and fellow
  - Call (734) 998-6082 for patients of Dr. Stucken
  - Call: (734) 615-8838 for patients of Dr. Joseph and Dr. Kim
- After hours and on weekends:
  - Call Hospital Paging at (734) 936-6267 and ask for the ENT Doctor on call.

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