

What to expect with eye lid surgery.

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Upper eyelid surgery-Overview

Surgery for the upper lids is done to improve vision, reduce the heavy feeling from excess weight on the eyelids, and to improve the appearance of the lids. Surgery is usually an outpatient procedure done at a surgery center with local anesthesia and IV sedation. Surgery for both upper lids usually takes about an hour, and the whole experience from registration to being discharged from the center takes about 2-3 hours.

After IV sedation, **driving should be avoided for about 24 hours**. After upper lid surgery, small dressings are used above the lids so that the vision is not impeded. Blurriness is normal because of antibiotic ointment that is used on the incision and also in the eye for protection.

Following your surgery-

As the local anesthetic wears off and the nerves wake up from being 'asleep' the area will be sore for a few hours. Typically, acetaminophen (Tylenol) should be taken on a proactive basis (every 4-6 hours) and is usually adequate for this temporary discomfort. Once the effect of the anesthetic completely wears off, by the evening, pain is minimal. Most patients do not need any pain medicine by the next morning. By the second day discomfort is minimal or no longer experienced.

Ice (either a cold gel pack, or a bag or frozen peas) should be used on the lids for 10 minutes each hour while the patient is awake. Ice should not be used continuously since it will be uncomfortable and can decrease the blood circulation in the lids. After the first day, the ice can be cut back to between 5-10 minutes 4-5 times a day. This should be done through days 2-5 and then stopped. After the 5th day, **luke-warm compresses** should be used 2 or 3 times a day. This will increase the blood circulation and speed healing. It also helps with the getting rid of the bruising. Very hot compresses should be avoided since this can damage the very delicate skin and can also cause bleeding.

Bruising is normal and starts to go away after the second day. It helps to elevate the head at night for the first night, but is usually not necessary beyond the second night. Sunglasses or tinted lenses may help to hide the bruising. Make-up can be used elsewhere on the face but should not be used on or near the incision. The bruising usually takes 2-3 weeks to resolve. Most patients feel comfortable returning to work in 3-5 days but should expect some bruising and swelling up to 3 weeks after surgery.

Blood drainage is normal from the incisions. Expect a small amount for the first few days. If this does happen, you can use a clean tissue or gauze, close both eyes, and apply the tissue with gentle pressure for a few minutes. . If the bleeding persists or is significant, *you should call the office immediately*.

Antibiotic Ointment is used during your procedure. There will be **antibiotic ointment** under the dressings and also some in the eye right after surgery (may cause temporary blurring). You will be given a prescription for additional antibiotic ointment to use during recovery. It is best to first wash gently with water and a mild soap, pat the area dry gently, and then apply a thin film of ointment with either a clean finger or a Q-tip over the incision and stitches.

Begin using the prescription ointment as instructed – beginning the day after surgery & following removal of the dressings:

Prescription ointment should be used

- 3 times a day for the first week, then
- 2 times a day for the second week, and just
- 1 time nightly at bedtime for the third week.

Visible Recovery of Incision-

Very fine sutures are used to minimize the scar. Often dissolvable stitches can be used and these will disintegrate at around 2-3 weeks. By making it within the crease of the eyelid, the incision is hidden very well. Over the first several weeks, the incision will appear a red line with bumps along it where the stitches went through the skin. The red line and the bumps typically disappear over the following few months. If the redness or bumps persist for longer than average, you will be given a prescription for a steroid ointment to further decrease the scar. By 4- 6 months after surgery, it is difficult to see the incision even with a microscope.

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Things to watch for & plan ahead.

Lid surgery is generally very safe.

All surgery involves risks. As with any surgery, bleeding and infection are possible. Issues like bleeding or infection near the eye can hurt the eye or hurt the vision. These are very rare with lid surgery. If you have medical problems, it is a good idea to be evaluated by your primary care provider before surgery.

Current Medications and Supplements prior to surgery-

- Blood thinners such as **coumadin, warfarin, plavix**, etc should be stopped prior to surgery but you should check with your primary physician first.
- Over the counter medicine such as **aspirin, motrin, naprosyn** etc. should also be stopped before surgery since these can sometimes cause serious bleeding.
- Herbal medicines such as **ginko, vit E, omega-3 fatty acids** may also have blood-thinning properties and should be stopped before surgery.

Avoid after surgery: Minor restrictions following surgery.

- **Avoid driving within 24 hours** of surgery following IV sedation.
- **Avoid strenuous activity** (anything that raises the heartbeat or blood pressure or makes you out-of-breath) should be avoided for the first week. **Light activities** like a short walk or fixing meals can be resumed by the day after surgery.
- **Avoid rubbing, pulling, or putting tension on the incision.** You should be careful not to rub or pull on the lids since this can break the sutures prematurely and open the incision. After the dressings are removed the day after surgery, taking a shower and getting the incision wet is ok as long as rubbing or putting tension on the incision is avoided.
- **Avoid make-up** near the incision until otherwise instructed. Cosmetics may be used elsewhere on the face.

*Contact the office immediately if you experience the following:

If you have **questions or concerns** following your surgery,
please do not hesitate to call: **503.227.2020***.

- **Bleeding persists.** If the bleeding continues or is significant, you should call the office immediately. A small amount of blood drainage is normal from the incisions for the first few days. If this does happen, you can use a clean tissue or gauze, close both eyes, and apply the tissue with gentle pressure for a few minutes.
- **Pain or swelling** worsens after the second day, contact the office immediately. This may be sign of a problem like an infection. Generally, pain goes away by the second day.
- **Incision opened. THIS IS VERY RARE.** If you feel like you may have opened the incision you should call the office right away. For example, rubbed the lids accidentally while sleeping. Pulling or applied tension when cleaning or applying ointment may also cause the incision to open.

If the opening is small, it will often heal on its own with no additional treatment. Very fine sutures are used to minimize the scar. Sometimes an extra stitch will be needed and can usually be placed in the office.