

## Patient information factsheet

# After your eyelid surgery

We've given you this factsheet because you have had surgery on your eyelid. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have after the procedure.

### What activities can I do?

Avoid heavy lifting or straining but move around normally. Your ability to judge distance will be reduced if your eye is covered, so please take care especially when making hot drinks or walking on uneven surfaces, and always hold handrails when climbing stairs. When making hot drinks, you may find it helpful to put the cup in the sink when pouring from the kettle to avoid splashing boiling water.

You should not drive if:

- your eye is covered
- your vision is blurry
- you feel unwell

Avoid swimming, makeup, contact lenses and environments or activities that could contaminate the wound (such as gardening or DIY) for three weeks. If there are other activities you wish to discuss, please speak to the surgical team.

### Will it be painful?

You may feel bruised after the surgery. If you need pain relief, you can take paracetamol or your usual pain-relieving medicine.

### How should I remove the dressings?

Do not remove the dressings until the date instructed by the surgical team. Keep the dressings dry until then.

To remove the dressings:

1. First you must wash and dry your hands.
2. Peel off the tape from your forehead. When the dressings become loose, remove and discard them. Don't worry if there is some blood on the eye pad.
3. If your eye is clean, leave it alone. If it is sticky, gently clean it with cooled boiled water and cotton balls. Try not to get the stitches too wet as they may dissolve.
4. Never clean your wound. Try to keep your wound dry until your next clinic appointment.

Your eyelids will be swollen and bruised for about two weeks. This will settle without treatment. However, if there is a lot of swelling, you can gently hold a cold compress (ice wrapped in a clean, dry cloth or towel) over your closed eyelid to help reduce the swelling.

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## How do I look after the wound?

- **If your surgery involved stitches**, keep them dry and avoid rubbing or pulling on your wound to prevent it from opening up. You may have dissolvable or non-dissolvable stitches. The surgical team will advise if they need to be removed when they see you at your follow-up clinic appointment.
- **If your surgery did not require stitches**, keep the area dry and leave it alone. If it gets sticky, use cooled boiled water and cotton balls to gently dab the stickiness off.

To wash your face, gently use a damp flannel (avoiding the operated area) and pat dry. You may have a bath or shower from the neck down. Avoid washing your hair for a few days. When you do wash your hair, make sure that the water flows backwards and not over your face.

## How do I put in eye drops/ointment?

The treatments we have prescribed you will help to reduce your risk of infection and keep your eye comfortable.

1. Always wash your hands before putting the drops/ointment in.
2. Always shake the eye drops bottle gently before use.
3. Do not let the bottle tip touch your eye.
4. Do not pull or put pressure on the operated eyelid to put drops in. If you need to, you can pull gently on the un-operated eyelid to open the eye.
5. You can apply the ointment gently with a cotton bud if you find it difficult to apply it directly from the tube.

## How often do I put the eye drops/ointment in?

Please use the antibiotics as instructed below. Leave a minute between each drop and blink to spread them over the eye. Always put the drops in before the ointment, if you have been prescribed both.

### Chloramphenicol drops: (keep in the fridge)

One drop in the RIGHT/LEFT eye  
\_\_\_\_\_ times daily for \_\_\_\_\_

### Chloramphenicol ointment:

A small amount in the RIGHT/LEFT eye  
\_\_\_\_\_ times daily for \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Will I receive a further appointment?

The surgical team will tell you if you need a follow-up appointment. You will receive information about this by post. If it doesn't arrive in the timescale indicated by the surgical team, please telephone the Southampton eye unit outpatients' appointments desk directly on **023 8120 5073**.

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## Contact us

Contact us **immediately** if you experience:

- profuse bleeding
- worsening vision
- persistent stickiness

Eye short stay unit (eye ward)

Telephone: **023 8120 8600**

Southampton eye unit

Telephone: **023 8120 5073**

Email: **uhs.eyearunitadmin@nhs.net**

Southampton eye casualty triage line

Telephone: **023 8120 6592** (for the assessment and triage of urgent problems and emergencies only)

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