

Postoperative Instructions for Patients Undergoing Eyelid Surgery

1. Getting home and postoperative supervision.

It is extremely hazardous to drive after general anesthesia or intravenous sedation. Please arrange for a responsible adult to drive you home and stay with you for at least 24 hours.

2. Activity for the first 24 hours.

The effects of anesthesia can remain in your body as long as 24 hours. After surgery, you must plan to rest for 24 hours. Avoid straining and stooping. Sit upright as much as possible.

3. Sleeping position, ice packs and compresses.

Sleeping with the head elevated on two pillows decreases the amount of bruising and swelling. Keep iced compresses on your eyes for 48 hours - except while sleeping - to help reduce bruising and swelling. Compresses can be either a washcloth or 4 x 4 gauze pads soaked in saline. Some patients prefer to use alternating bags of frozen peas from the freezer. Alternate 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off if using ice packs.

4. Diet.

After surgery you may take liquids such as soup, tea, soft drinks, or Jell-O. Gradually progress to a soft diet and then a regular diet over the next 24 hours.

5. Medications, herbal supplements, vitamins and alcohol.

Fill your prescriptions and take your post-operative medications as directed. If you should become nauseated or develop a rash, call the office. You may resume your regular medications unless Dr. Boyd directs otherwise. However, avoid aspirin and aspirin-containing products for two weeks before and after surgery. Remember, many herbal supplements adversely affect the clotting process and actively cause bruising and bleeding. These should be stopped two weeks before surgery and may be resumed two weeks afterwards. Avoid alcohol until post-operative medications are finished. Dr. Boyd does not recommend taking mega doses of vitamins in excess of the normal daily requirement (which is more than adequately met by a normal balanced diet). Please discontinue this form of medication for two weeks before and after surgery unless you are being treated for a specific deficiency. One multivitamin tablet per day is permissible, however.

6. Dressings.

You will have no dressings on your eyelids apart from some Steri-Strips at the corners. These are used to secure the ends of the sutures (stitches). Do not remove them.

7. Wound care, shampooing, showering.

Gently wipe over the wounds with a Q-tip dipped in 3% Hydrogen Peroxide ('full strength') to remove crusts, blood, etc. Do this three times per day. Apply a small amount of ophthalmic Bacitracin ointment over the suture line. Wash your hair daily with a mild shampoo.

8. Activity after the first 24 hours (including driving).

Avoid strenuous activity for two weeks after surgery. However, moderate walking is encouraged. Do not drive for one week and never drive while taking pain medication. You may wear makeup after checking with Dr. Boyd. When outdoors, dark glasses should be worn to protect the suture line from direct sun exposure. Sun block may also be applied over the suture lines once the sutures are removed.

9. Things to avoid. (See 2 and 5 also)

It is vital that you do not smoke after surgery to avoid respiratory and wound healing complications. Avoid sun exposure and wear sunscreen over the suture lines when it cannot be avoided.

10. Bruising, swelling and other normal events.

You will have some swelling for several days after surgery but this will subside gradually. It will take several weeks before you can see the final result. Severe pain with excessive swelling of one eyelid (as compared to the other) should be called to the attention of Dr. Boyd immediately. Some patients temporarily experience dry, scratchy eyes. Artificial tears (Hypotears or 'liquid tears') may be used when awake, supplemented by Lacrilube ointment before bed. (Using Lacrilube during the day interferes with vision.) Someone in the office will call you the day after surgery to check on your condition and answer any questions you might have. You can reach Dr. Boyd or a staff member around the clock by calling (310) 295-2287. These instructions are not intended to cover every possible problem that could arise. Good judgment on your part is essential for a good result.