

Caring for your eye after surgery

Eye Pre-assessment Team
Tel: 01271 311594

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

At home

When you arrive home, take it easy for the rest of the day. The eye will remain covered until the following morning and so your judgement of depth and distance will be reduced that evening.

Your shield

Do not disturb the plastic shield until the next morning. Remove it when you wake up in the morning. Wash the shield in warm soapy water, rinse in tap water and dry with tissue or kitchen roll.

Put the plastic shield on again at night for the next two weeks, so you don't accidentally knock the eye in your sleep. The shield is pear-shaped, and the pointed end sits between your eyes and the rounded end sits on your cheek. You will need some cellotape or surgical tape, such as micropore, to stick it on with. You can get this from a chemist and some supermarkets.

Remember to wash and dry the shield, ready for the next evening.

Bathing your eye

If your eyes are sticky when you wake up, you need to bathe them. To do this:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly.
2. Using cooled, boiled water and kitchen roll, wipe the outer edges of your eyelids from the nose outwards, until the lids are clean.
3. Wash your hands again.

You may need to do this for up to two weeks.

Do not use

- tissue, as this will disintegrate.
- cotton wool, as fibres can get into your eye.

Putting in eye drops

If you are using more than one type of eye drop, please leave five minutes between each one.

You will need to use eyedrops for about four weeks.

1. Wash and dry your hands thoroughly.
2. Check you have the right bottle and make sure you know which eye the drops are to go in.
3. Either stand in front of a mirror, sit in a chair or lie down; whichever you find is best for you.
4. Take the top off the bottle, tip your head back and look up.
5. Pull down your lower eyelid and squeeze a drop into your eye, taking care not to touch the eye with the tip of the bottle.
6. Close your eyes and gently wipe your eyelids with a clean tissue.
7. Put the top firmly back on the bottle and put it in a safe place.
8. Wash your hands thoroughly.

Another way of putting the drops in

Follow steps 1 – 3 as above. Then:

4. Take the top off the bottle and hold it horizontally.
5. Place the neck of the bottle on the bridge of your nose, so that the dropper is pointing towards the eye that has had the operation.
6. Using your other hand, pull down the lower lid of the operated eye.
7. Tip your head back and look up.
8. Squeeze the bottle hard and the drops will go into your lower eyelid.
9. Close your eyes and gently wipe your eyelids with a clean tissue.
10. Put the top firmly back on the bottle and put in a safe place.
11. Wash your hands thoroughly.

The autodrop dispenser is available from most high street chemists and can be helpful for applying drops.

Things to expect

Discomfort

Often the eye will water and it is normal to feel mild discomfort, soreness, itchiness or irritation for some weeks after the operation. A simple painkiller like Paracetamol should make it more comfortable. It is important not to rub your eye, as this may cause problems with the wound healing.

If a painkiller does not stop the pain or the pain gets worse, **please ring the eye clinic nurses on 01271 314181** (the eye problems and advice answer phone) and leave your message. We will get back to you as soon as possible (9am – 5pm Monday – Thursday, 9am – 1pm Friday). **Outside of these hours, ring the main switchboard on 01271 322577** and ask to speak to the senior house officer for ophthalmology.

Sight

Your vision will not be perfect the day after the operation. It will need time to settle. Your eye may also be sensitive to light for a few days. If so, sunglasses may help.

Driving

Do not drive for a week. If you are confident with your vision after this time you may resume your driving. If you are not confident with your vision wait until your follow up appointment.

It is also a good idea to check the terms of your car insurance, as some policies state that you must not drive for a specified period after an operation.

Remember

- Never share your eye drops with someone else, as this can spread infection.
- Bottles of eye drops should only be used for
- 28 days after opening unless otherwise labeled. (It may help to write the date you opened the bottle on the label.)
- It may help to identify different drops by sticking different coloured labels on the front of bottles.
- If the label directs you to do so, keep bottles of drops in the fridge, but don't freeze them!
- Never stop using your eyedrops unless you are told to do so. If you run out or lose them, you can get more drops on prescription from your GP.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns about your eyes or eye drops, please contact the **eye clinic nurses on 01271 314181 (the eye problems and advice answer phone)**.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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