

Patient's Instructions

Blepharoplasty SCOP

Introduction

The following instructions are designed to answer questions that may arise regarding post-operative care and tell you what you can do and what you should not do during your convalescence.

Swelling and Discoloration

As you were told before surgery, a varying amount of temporary swelling and discoloration follows every one of these operations, so try not to become anxious or depressed about it, it will pass.

After the Operation

1. Continue to take antibiotics until your supply is exhausted; the prescriptions need not be refilled.
2. Sleep with your head elevated 40 Degrees for two weeks; an additional pillow or two under your mattress may be used, if necessary.
3. Apply ice compresses made of wash cloths (not an ice bag) to your eyes as much as possible during the first three days after surgery.
4. *Stay Up* (sitting, standing, walking around) as much as possible after you return home --- this is important! Of course, you should rest when you tire.
5. Avoid bending or lifting heavy things for one week. Besides aggravating swelling, this may raise the blood pressure and start hemorrhage. No lifting over 5 pounds the first week, 25 pounds the second week.
6. Avoid straining at stool, which also raises the blood pressure. If you feel you need a laxative get *Correctol* from your pharmacist (no prescription is required).
7. Avoid hitting and bumping your face and eyes. It is wise not to pick up small children, and you should sleep alone for one or two weeks following your operation.
8. Avoid sunning the face for one year. At least a #15 sun screen should be worn on the face.
9. Don't tweeze your eyebrows for two weeks.
10. You may have your hair washed at a salon or wash it gently yourself 24 hours after your surgery. Do not use the usual heat type hair dryer; use the cap type or blow dryer set on cool setting.
11. You may take a shower or bath the day after surgery. The face may be gently cleansed with cotton Pledgets.
12. Go over your suture lines 2 to 3 times a day with peroxide on a Q-Tip, but avoid getting any in your eyes. The put a *very small* amount of Vaseline on a Q-Tip and apply to suture lines at the outer corners of the eyes; avoid getting any in your eyes, as it may cause eye irritation.
13. Take only prescribed medication or Tylenol, never aspirin, as it promotes bleeding.
14. You may take a shower or bath the day after surgery. Do not be afraid to get suture lines wet but avoid strong water pressure.
15. Report any excessive bleeding that persists after holding pressure for 15-20-minutes.

Your Medications

You will be given several prescriptions at your preoperative appointment to be taken after surgery unless

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Facial Plastic Surgery

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otherwise instructed. One prescription will be for pain. It should be filled only if the cold compresses do not suffice because pain relievers usually cause sensations of dizziness or drowsiness and make recovery tedious. Don't use aspirin or pain relievers containing aspirin as they may cause hemorrhage. Tylenol may be used if other pain relievers are not readily available. The other prescription will be for insomnia. Have it filled only if you have difficulty falling asleep at night because these, too, may cause dizziness or drowsiness the next day.

Hemorrhage

If hemorrhage occurs, go to bed, elevate the head, apply cold compresses over the eyes, and have someone report it to us by telephone. You will be told to report to the clinic.

Temperature

Generally, the body temperature does not rise much above 100 degrees following eyelid surgery, and this rise is due to dehydration caused by insufficient intake of fluids. People often think they have an increased temperature because they feel warm, when in reality, they do not. To be sure, measure your temperature with a thermometer. Report any persistent temperature above 100 degrees, however.

Resuming Normal Activities

- 1) You may wear a wig or hair piece as soon as you desire.
- 2) Do not apply hair coloring until three weeks have elapsed following your operation.
- 3) You may begin wearing eyeglasses, sunglasses, or contact lenses the day following surgery.
- 4) Don't go swimming, dive, water ski or participate in strenuous athletic activity for at least one month after surgery.
- 5) Eye shadow and false eyelashes should not be applied until 10 days after surgery.
- 6) You can camouflage the discoloration about the eyes with a coverstick cosmetic (two shades darker than your skin color) before you come to the office to get your first set of sutures removed. Bring it near the line of the incision but do not apply over the incisions themselves until several days after the sutures have been removed. The following technique of application seems best: First, smear a layer over the entire discolored area; then apply more with a "patting" motion; finally, blend the edges with the surrounding skin.
- 7) You should probably not plan to return to work until four or five days have elapsed following the surgery, or perhaps, one week. Even then, it might be wise to procure sun shades with large frames unless you don't mind becoming the center of attention. You'll have to play this by ear.

Your First Post-Operative Office Visit

Appointments will be arranged for you to be seen in the one week after surgery. If these times have not been given to you by the time you leave the surgical facility please contact the office at (910)295-0216.

Don't build up a feeling of fear and anxiety about what is going to be done to you during this visit. A few skin sutures will be removed with special delicate instruments which minimize discomfort. The incisions will be gently cleansed, and you will probably feel much better.

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About Some Potentially Upsetting, But Relatively Unimportant Things That Might Occur During the Healing Period

- 1) Swelling may persist somewhat longer than usual. However, we have never yet encountered a case wherein it didn't ultimately subside. The same is true of discoloration.
- 2) Swelling and discoloration become more pronounced after some patients leave the clinic. This is why you should follow the instructions previously given to minimize swelling and not take any medications containing aspirin. Furthermore, if you have nasal allergy or "sinus trouble," you should take antihistamines to decongest your nose as this may be a contributing factor.
- 3) Rarely, the whites of one or both eyes may become partially discolored. This is painless, will not harm vision, and absorbs eventually.
- 4) Occasionally, the swelling will cause the lower lid to be separated from the eyeball. This condition will be reversed as the swelling subsides but can be prolonged if face powder granules, etc., become deposited in the area when cosmetics are being applied.
- 5) During the first several days following surgery, the scars will be imperceptible. Then they go through a period of slight swelling and, perhaps, reddening, later (especially at the outer corners), this subsides and they become virtually imperceptible again. This is the way normal scars mature. Thus, any unevenness of the edges of the incisions or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary and will subside with the passage of time. Cosmetics or cortisone creams may be used to minimize the problem while the progressive evolution is occurring.
- 6) Occasionally, small cysts which resemble ordinary white heads will appear beside the upper lid incisions; like white heads, they will disappear after their contents are expressed in the office. They may also occur in the lower lids, but less frequently than the uppers.
- 7) Patients often experience some blurring of vision for two or three days after the operation. This is generally due to swelling and/or ointments that have been used during the operation and will clear spontaneously.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office at 910-295-0216. Our normal business hours are Monday-Thursday 8am-5pm and Friday 8am-4pm. If you need assistance after normal business hours you will call Moore Regional Hospital operator at 910-715-1000 and ask for the plastic surgeon on call for Pinehurst Surgical Clinic.

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