

Patient Information

Eyelid surgery

This leaflet gives you information that will help you decide whether to have surgery on your eyelids, as outlined in your consultation. You might want to discuss this decision with a relative or carer. Before you have the operation, you will be asked to sign a consent form and so it is important that you understand the leaflet before you decide to have surgery. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your surgeon.

Surgery

There are many different kinds of eyelid surgery, depending on your specific type of problem that we discussed in your consultation. One person's operation is naturally different to another's, so please do not assume that you will undergo the same procedure as a friend, even if, for example, you both have a watery eye.

Eyelid surgery is usually carried out under a local anaesthetic. With a local anaesthetic you will be awake during the operation and you may feel sensations in the area being operated, but you should feel nothing sharp or painful. You may be able to see some of what is happening, but you will be aware of the very bright operating theatre lights. In some cases, the surgeon will specifically ask you to open your eyes or look up / down, but otherwise feel free to keep your eyes closed unless otherwise directed, which will probably leave you most comfortable.

Aspirin/warfarin/clopidogrel drugs

If you are taking any of these drugs, you should have been given instructions about how to proceed at your consultation. If you start taking any of these medications between your consultation and surgery, or if this was not discussed at your consultation, it is vital that you contact Mr Madge's secretary (01432 355444 ext 5898) prior to your operation going ahead. You will then be advised how to proceed. If you take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. ibuprofen,

voltarol), it is preferable to avoid these prior to surgery, however, these are often necessary for other ailments and should not be stopped if you would otherwise be in pain.

Preoperative instructions

Please dress casually and comfortably. Avoid wearing jewellery and thoroughly clean your face prior to coming to hospital. No make-up or contact lenses please on the day of surgery. Please take your standard oral medication (except see above re. aspirin/warfarin/clopidogrel/ibuprofen) on the morning of surgery.

If possible, stop smoking for at least two weeks prior to surgery and until wounds are fully healed and at least two weeks thereafter. The reason for this is that smoking may delay healing, particularly if a skin graft or flap is performed.

Risks

Any surgical procedure has a risk involved and eyelid surgery is no different. As there is such a huge variety of eyelid procedures, each tailored to the individual, this leaflet cannot detail the specific risks for each operation; these should have been discussed with you at your clinic appointment. Although the vast majority of operations go extremely well, prior to surgery you will be asked to sign consent form, at which time you will have further opportunity to discuss the various attendant risks for your particular procedure. In addition to the risks specific to your procedure, all operations carry a tiny risk of a “devastating” complication, such as disfigurement or loss of sight. The risk of such an event is exceptionally low, in the order of 1:10,000.

Following surgery

After surgery, you can experience some swelling/ bruising for one to two weeks. Typically the swelling is at its worst after about 48 hours, so please do not be alarmed if bruising worsens the day after surgery; this is normal and in rare cases the discolouration spreads down your face from your cheeks to your chin. If so, it will soon fade.

You may still have a little oozing or bleeding from the site of surgery over the first few hours, which should resolve by itself. Following surgery, most surgeons prefer to apply a firm dressing to the surgical site until at least the following morning, typically secured with elastoplast tape. While some surgeons do not do this, we believe that the great reduction in swelling / bruising achieved with this technique is worth the temporary inconvenience that padding causes. Should you wish not to have your eye padded shut following surgery, please

discuss this with your surgeon prior to surgery. In patients undergoing surgery on both left and right eyelids, both eyelids are typically padded closed, one for around an hour after surgery and the other until the following morning.

If the patch becomes loose, apply more tape. Do not remove the patch. While the patch is on, do not get it wet. Shower from the neck down or take a bath.

Cool packs applied to the wound are very helpful at reducing the swelling and bruising. If you wish to, apply a cool pack (cold flannel / frozen peas wrapped in flannel / ice cubes in plastic bag wrapped in flannel) to the area for 10-15 minutes, six times per day for the first two to five days.

As the local anaesthetic wears off, you will experience tightness of the eyelids. Pain after surgery is typically minimal; however, if you experience significant discomfort please take mild pain relief as required (e.g. paracetamol). Paracetamol taken regularly works better than when taken occasionally.

Avoid strenuous exercise, bending or heavy lifting for a few days after surgery as this can precipitate bleeding. Sleep with two to three pillows in order to keep the head elevated – this will help to reduce swelling / bruising.

Antibiotic ointment should be applied to the wound twice a day, which prevents scab formation and may reduce the risk of infection. Wash hands thoroughly prior to applying ointment.

If crusting occurs, you may clean the wound with warm boiled water using cotton wool or cotton buds to remove crusts and pat dry. Do not use soap. Then apply a layer of antibiotic ointment.

You may shower and wash your hair, but try and avoid getting soap on the wounds. Dab them dry afterwards and apply ointment.

Stitches / sutures

Skin stitches typically need to be removed, although in certain cases dissolvable stitches will be used. If stitches are to be removed, these are typically removed five to ten days following surgery at your follow-up appointment (usually on a Thursday morning).

Healing

Healing is a gradual process and the scars may remain pink for up to three months, after which time it may become pale. The area around the wound may be numb for several weeks or even months. You may

experience occasional sharp pain or itching of the wound; this is normal during healing. If a skin graft is used, the initial appearance of the graft will be very different to the final appearance, which may take many months to achieve.

Specific Instructions for you
(Tick boxes show which statements apply)

- Please remove the pad yourself tomorrow or on (delete as required)

- Do not remove the dressing. Please attend the Victoria Eye Unit on at to have the dressing removed. Removal of the dressing yourself may do harm

- A skin graft has been used. Please do not rub The skin graft until instructed that it is safe to do

In the event of any concerns, please contact the Eye Unit on telephone 01432 355444 ext 1766

This information leaflet has been compiled by Mr Simon N Madge, Consultant Ophthalmic & Oculoplastic Surgeon extension 5898.

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