

How to care for your eye after surgery



Information for patients attending appointments at King's College Hospital only

This leaflet explains what to expect after your eye operation and how to look after yourself over the next two weeks. If you have any concerns about your eye or your care, please contact us on one of the phone numbers on page eight.



The first 24 hours after your operation

If you had a local anaesthetic you should not have any side effects.

If you had a general anaesthetic you may feel tired, dizzy or weak from time to time. This may last for up to 7 - 10 days. You should:

- rest quietly
- move around quietly indoors
- eat and drink normally, and take any regular medication as usual
- be very careful not to knock or press on your eye.

You must not:

- drive or operate any motorised vehicle or electrical equipment
- sign any legal document or make important decisions
- drink alcohol.

It is normal to have some discomfort after eye surgery. This usually goes away after about two days. If you need painkillers, take something you are used to such as paracetamol. Do not take more tablets than recommended on the packet.

The day after your operation

You can take off your eye dressing after breakfast on the morning after your surgery.

How do I remove my eye dressing?

You may find it useful to have a friend or relative to help you. If you are on your own, stand in front of a mirror so you can see what you are doing.

- Wash your hands.
- Gently take off the dressing, which includes a plastic shield, an eye pad and paraffin gauze square. Do not throw the plastic shield away – you will need to use it again.
- While you are taking off the dressing, keep your eye closed. When it is off, you can gently open your eye.



- Wash your eye shield using warm water and soap; rinse and dry it carefully and put it to one side. You will need to put it on again at night for up to two weeks and may need to use it when you go out. We explain when to use it on page four.
- Your eye may be sticky. Sometimes your eyelids may feel like they are stuck together, making it difficult to open your eye. Do not worry – this is normal. See below for information about how to clean your eyelids gently so you can open your eye.
- If you had a local anaesthetic and were awake when you had your surgery, you may have been given injections around your eye. This can cause bruising and you may have a slightly black eye. This is normal and will gradually go away.
- The white part of your eye may be bright red (bloodshot). This is also a type of bruising and will gradually go away.

For the first few days after surgery your sight may be blurred and your eye slightly sore. If the soreness continues or your sight gets worse, contact the hospital on 020 3299 1705, 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday.

How do I clean my eye?

- Boil some water and allow it to cool.
- Wash your hands.
- Use cotton wool or clean gauze dipped in the cool boiled water to gently wipe around your eyelid and remove any sticky deposits from your lids and lashes.
- Do not wipe inside your eye, wash your eye out with water or press on your eye.

During the first two weeks, you may need to clean your eye twice a day because the drops and the healing process can cause slight stickiness.

But if your eye becomes very sticky and sore you might have an infection. If this happens, contact our helpline for advice on 020 3299 1705.

After cleaning your eye, use the drops that we have prescribed for you (see page five).



Important

Keep using your eye drops as advised on page five to seven of this booklet unless we have told you to do something different. If you run out of the drops, you need to get more from your GP (home doctor). Your GP will need to see one of the eye drop bottles that we have given you, so take this and your discharge letter with you when you visit them.

For the first two weeks after your operation

Take care not to:

- poke your eye
- rub your eye
- knock your eye.

Even though you may feel very well after your surgery, you have had a big operation and you should take great care to allow your eye to heal properly.

After the first 24 hours you can get back to your normal routine, but you should:

- use your eye drops as prescribed
- wear your plastic eye shield at night for at least one week and up to two weeks if you wish. Fix it over your eye using tape that you can buy from a chemist or supermarket
- wear distance glasses or sunglasses when you go outside, to protect your eye. Wear your eye shield if you do not have these
- wear your eye shield when you wash your hair. Try to do this leaning backwards – you may need someone to help you
- avoid heavy lifting, strenuous exercise and heavy housework
- use your eye as much as you need to read, watch television and so on.

Do not:

- swim for six weeks
- wear eye make-up for four – six weeks
- drive until you have first talked it over with your doctor or nurse.

You will not harm your eye by using your glasses even though they may no longer be the right prescription. We usually ask you to go to your optician for new glasses four – six weeks after your surgery.

Your eye may feel gritty or sandy. You may also feel like you have an eyelash in your eye. This is normal as long as it is not too uncomfortable. If you are worried, contact us on our helpline number, 020 3299 1705.

How do I use my eye drops?

We will give you some eye drops to use after your surgery. Unless you are told otherwise, start using them as soon as you remove the dressing on the day after your operation.

It is very important to keep using the eye drops as advised in this booklet, unless you have been told to do something different.

You may find it useful to have a friend or relative put in your drops, but learning to do it yourself will help you to stay independent.

A district nurse may be able to visit you to put in your drops. If you need this help, your pre-assessment nurse will arrange it before you have your operation.

How do I put in my eye drops?

- Wash your hands.
- Lie comfortably on a sofa or bed looking up at the ceiling.
- Hold the eye drop bottle with the hand you use to write with.
- With your other hand, gently pull down your bottom eyelid.
- Bring the bottle dropper close to and above your eye.
- Keeping your eye open, squeeze the bottle until a drop goes into your eye.
- Close your eye and use a clean tissue to soak up any excess drops.
- Do not let the top of the bottle touch your eye or anything else – it must stay sterile.
- Do not allow other people to use your eye drops.



How often do I need to use my eye drops?

Left or right eye

- Week 1 4 times a day
- Week 2 3 times a day
- Week 3 2 times a day
- Week 4 Once a day

G. Maxitrol

To help you keep track of when you have put in your drops, fill in the table on the opposite page.

We may give you different types of eye drops after your surgery. Your doctor or nurse will explain how and when to use them.

We may also give you some tablets to take. Your doctor or nurse will explain when to take these.

If you use glaucoma drops and are not having glaucoma surgery, continue to use them as normal.



When to take your eye drops

This table helps you to keep track of when to put in your eye drops.

Put a tick in the correct box each time you use them.

Week 1	Breakfast	Lunch	Tea/Supper	Bedtime
Day 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week 2	Breakfast	Lunch	Bedtime
Day 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week 3	Breakfast	Bedtime
Day 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Week 4	Breakfast
Day 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	<input type="checkbox"/>



Useful information

Your hospital number is

Your consultant is.....

Your pre-assessment nurse is.....

Who can I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on the following numbers:

7pm - 7am, the first night after surgery

For urgent advice on the first night only, please call 08448 222 888 and ask for pager number 813086. Leave a message and your contact number and the on-call day surgery nurse will phone you. If you cannot get through to this number and **it is an emergency, tel 020 3299 9000 and ask for the on-call eye doctor.**

9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday

Call the eye pre-assessment nurse on our helpline number, 020 3299 1705. Leave a short message, your hospital number and a phone number where we can contact you.

Follow up appointments at King's College Hospital

Tel: **020 3299 1919**

Follow up appointments at Lewisham Hospital

Tel: **020 8333 3072**

Admissions at King's College Hospital

Tel: **020 3299 3606**



Care provided by students

King's is a teaching hospital where our students get practical experience by treating patients. Please tell your doctor or nurse if you do not want students to be involved in your care. Your treatment will not be affected by your decision.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Fax: **020 3299 3626**

Email: **kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.

Where can I get more information about cataract surgery?

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk

Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB):

Helpline: 0303 123 9999, 8.45am – 5.30pm, Monday to Friday,

www.rnib.co.uk



Document revised by:
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King's College Hospital is part of King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre (ASHC), a pioneering collaboration between King's College London, and Guy's and St.Thomas', King's College Hospital and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trusts.

For more information, visit www.kingshealthpartners.org 