



COMMONWEALTH

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - BLEPHAROPLASTY

ANY SUDDEN DECREASE IN VISION OR PAIN UNRELIEVED BY MEDICINE OR LARGE SWELLING, ESPECIALLY IF ONLY ON ONE SIDE, SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

SWELLING

Every operation, no matter how minor, is accompanied by swelling of the surrounding tissues. The amount varies from person to person. The swelling itself is not serious and is to be expected after your surgery. The main thing to remember is that swelling eventually subsides. You can help decrease the swelling in the following ways:

1. Sleep with your head elevated at least 15 degrees for one week after surgery. Use an additional pillow or two under the mattress if necessary.
2. Apply iced compresses made of face towels - not an ice bag - to your eyelids for twenty minute periods every two hours for the first three days after your surgery. You can also soak gauze 4X4's in ice water, wring them out, and apply these over the eyes in place of compresses.
3. Avoid bending over or lifting heavy things for one week. Besides aggravating the swelling, this may raise your blood pressure and cause bleeding.
4. Avoid straining from constipation, since this will also raise your blood pressure. If you feel the need for a laxative, get Correctol or another mild laxative from your pharmacist. No prescription is required.
5. Avoid hitting or bumping your face and eyes. It is wise not to pick up small children. You should sleep alone for one or two weeks after your operation to avoid any accidental bumps.
6. Avoid sun exposure to the face during the first month after your operation. Your incisions are more susceptible to the sun's rays, and they can darken and become more noticeable with sun exposure. After they have healed sufficiently (about 10 days), you can apply SPF 15 or higher sunblock over the incisions for protection.
7. Do not tweeze your eyebrows for two weeks.
8. You may have your hair washed at a salon or wash it gently yourself twenty-four hours after surgery. Do not use a regular blow dryer near your face, since this may irritate your eyes. You can use a cap dryer instead.
9. You may take a shower or bath the day after surgery. Do not get your eyes wet. Your face may be gently cleaned with cotton squares.

DISCOLORATION

It is expected to have varying amounts of discoloration about the eyes. Like swelling, this is temporary and varies from person to person.

You can camouflage the discoloration to some extent with makeup, and we will tell you at your office visits when cosmetics can be applied. Do not apply makeup until all your sutures have been removed, and you have been given approval by the nurse or doctor.

DISCOMFORT

If you have discomfort after your surgery, the application of iced compresses should be effective. You will be given a prescription for a pain medication which you should take according to the instructions on the label. If this does not relieve your discomfort, or if the pain is greater on one side than on the other, please notify the office. If the office is closed for the night, the answering service will get in touch with the doctor.

TEMPERATURE

Generally, the body temperature does not rise much above 100 degrees following eyelid surgery. This slight rise is usually due to dehydration caused by insufficient fluid intake. It is not uncommon to feel warm to the touch when you actually do not have a fever. To be sure, use a thermometer to measure your temperature. Report any persistent temperature above 101 degrees to the office.

THE HEALING PHASE

1. Swelling may persist somewhat longer than you may have anticipated. Take heart; we have never encountered a case yet where it did not ultimately subside. The same is true for discoloration.
2. If you have nasal allergies or sinus trouble, you should take antihistamines to decongest your nose. Nasal congestion can contribute to the swelling and discoloration.
3. On rare occasions, the whites of one or both eyes may become partially discolored. This is painless. It will not harm your vision, and it will eventually clear without medical treatment.
4. Occasionally, the swelling will cause the lower lid to become separated from the eyeball proper. This condition is usually reversed as the swelling goes down. It can be prolonged, however, if face powder granules or other makeup become deposited in the area when cosmetics are being applied. Massage is sometimes advised by the doctor.
5. During the first several days following surgery, the incisions will be hard to see. Next, they go through a period of slight swelling and will possibly redden. Later this subsides and they become virtually imperceptible. This is the way scars normally mature. Any unevenness of the edges of the incisions or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary, and will subside with time. Cosmetics or cortisone creams may be used to minimize the visibility of your incisions during this process. If an incision was made inside the eyelid, the scar will not be visible.
6. Occasionally, small cysts which resemble ordinary whiteheads will appear beside the upper lid incisions. Like whiteheads, they will disappear when their contents are expressed in the office. They may occur in the lower eyelids as well, although this is rare.
7. Patients often experience some blurring of vision for two or three days after the operation. This is generally due to the swelling and/or the ointments being used to lubricate your eyes, and will clear up spontaneously.

POSTOPERATIVE CARE

Following your surgery, we will want to see you in the office at regularly scheduled intervals to monitor your progress.

RESUMING NORMAL ACTIVITIES

1. You may begin wearing glasses or sunglasses the day following your surgery. Do not wear contact lenses for at least 4 to 6 weeks after your surgery. Wrap-around sunglasses are preferable, since they protect the incisions from the sun's rays.
2. Do not swim, dive, water ski, or participate in strenuous athletic activity for at least one month after surgery.
3. Plan to return to work no sooner than four or five days after your surgery. A full week of recuperation would be ideal. Even after one week, you may feel more comfortable wearing large framed sunglasses when you are out in the public eye, if you are at all self conscious about your bruising.
4. False eyelashes should not be worn for ten days following your operation.
5. You may wear a wig or a hairpiece as soon as you desire.
6. Do not apply hair coloring until three weeks have elapsed since your surgery.

REMEMBER

If you have any questions that are not answered here, please call us. No question is too insignificant, and your calls are not an inconvenience to us. You can call us at (804) 378-7443.