
Instructions following eye socket surgery (enucleation, implant surgery etc)

After discharge from hospital

You will be wearing an eye pad for up to 1 week; this is usually removed at your 1 week postoperative visit. You will be given instructions on caring for the socket. In general, you will need to apply **drops** (antibiotic and 'steroid') 3 or 4 times a day after the eye is cleaned. To clean the area, use sterile saline or boiled water that has been allowed to cool, and cotton wool balls, and wipe the eye from the inner to the outer corner. Avoid pulling the lower eyelid down, as you may dislodge the **conformer** (a plastic shell placed under the eyelids at the time of surgery). If the conformer does become dislodged, do not panic. It is not the implant. It looks like a small, usually clear oval plastic shell, often with one or two holes in it. You may try and re-insert it if it comes out. The slightly pointy end points towards the nose. Pass the conformer gently up under the upper eyelid as far as it will comfortably go, and then pull the bottom eyelid down and the conformer should slip in behind the bottom eyelid and remain in place, held by the eyelids. If there is any difficulty, contact Dr Hardy.

Applying Drops

Apply drops (usually Chlorsig, an antibiotic, and a 'steroid' anti-inflammatory) if provided, to the socket 3-4 times a day, after cleaning the eye.

Swelling and Bruising

It is normal for the eyelids and eye socket to be swollen and bruised. The amount of bruising and swelling varies from person to person, but usually increases over the first 2 or 3 days, and may spread down the face, and then gradually diminishes. Swelling is often worse first thing in the morning, and lessens during the day. If there is a dramatic increase in swelling or bleeding, which is not stopped by 5 minutes of continuous firm pressure, contact Dr Hardy at his rooms during working hours or the Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital on 9929 8666.

Discharge from the eye

Some discharge from the socket is common. It should be carefully cleaned off before applying any ointment or drops. It is often greatest in the morning.

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Wearing an eye pad

There will usually be some discharge from the socket in the first 2 or 3 weeks after the surgery. This lessens over time. The eye pad will collect this discharge and can be changed once a day or more if required. As the discharge diminishes, you may wish to leave the pad off at home, but it can be replaced whenever you wish.

Showering and hair washing after surgery

It is safe to shower and wash your hair after the dressing is removed. Try to avoid excess water and soap/shampoo directly on or around the operation site for one week.

Activity after surgery

Light exercise (e.g. walking) is fine. You should avoid heavy lifting, straining or strenuous exercise for the first week. Reading, television or using a computer is fine.

Making the artificial eye

This is generally done about 6 weeks after the surgery when the swelling should have subsided. It is done at the office of the ocularist (artificial eye maker). An appointment will be made for you.