

Mark H. Peters, MD, FACS

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR BLEPHAROPLASTY

Our goal is for you to achieve the best possible result from your surgery. This requires participation from both you and our staff during the postoperative period. You should be familiar with these instructions in order to make the postoperative course a smooth one. We are happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have regarding your postoperative care.

THE SURGERY

Blepharoplasty usually takes one to three hours, depending on the extent of the surgery. If you are having all four eyelids done, the surgeon will probably work on the upper lids first, then the lower ones.

AFTER THE SURGERY

After surgery, Dr. Peters' will lubricate your eyes with ointment and the sutures for the upper eyelid are held in place with steri-strip. You are to continue to apply the **ophthalmic ointment** at bedtime and along the lower eyelid and upper eyelid incision lash line until your next appointment. Your eyelids may feel tight and sore as the anesthesia wears off, but you can control the discomfort with the pain medication he will prescribe. Also, you can moisten 2x2 gauze and place them over ice. After reaching a cold temperature, place the 2x2 gauze gently over the incision lines. This can be repeated as needed. If you feel any severe pain, call Dr. Peters immediately.

You will need to keep your head elevated on 2 pillows for several days, and to use cold compresses to reduce swelling and bruising. Bruising varies from person to person: it reaches its peak during the first week, and generally lasts anywhere from two weeks to a month.

Eye drops are recommended, since your eyelids may feel dry at first and your eyes may burn or itch. You can buy **Natural Tears** (saline) eye drops, over the counter, and instill into each eye 3-4 times' each day. For the first few weeks, you may also experience excessive tearing, sensitivity to light, and temporary changes in your eyesight, such as blurring or double vision.

Dr. Peters will follow your progress very closely for the first couple of weeks. Occasionally, you will notice some bloody drainage from the eyes. Your sutures will be removed approximately a week after surgery. Once they are out, the swelling and discoloration around your eyes will gradually subside, and you'll start to look and feel much better.

GETTING BACK TO NORMAL

You should be able to read or watch television after two or three days. However, you won't be able to wear contact lenses for about two weeks, and even then feel uncomfortable for a while.

Most people feel ready to go out in public and back to work in 10-14 days. By then, depending on your rate of healing and your doctor's instructions, you'll probably be able to wear makeup to hide the bruising that remains. You'll be sensitive to sunlight, wind, and other irritants for several weeks, so you should wear sunglasses and a sun block when you go out.

You should keep all activity to a minimum for 3 to 5 days, and avoid any strenuous activities for about 3 weeks. It's especially important to avoid activities that raise your blood pressure, including bending, lifting, straining, and rigorous sports. Avoid driving for a week.

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YOUR NEW LOOK

Healing is a gradual process, and your scars may remain slightly pink for six months or more after the surgery. Eventually, though, they'll fade to a thin nearly invisible white line.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR:** If any signs of infection such as an area of redness, oral temperature over 101F, foul smelling drainage, or pain which is not relieved with medication, then you must call immediately to be evaluated. Dr. Peters' office number is **(985) 223-2602**. After 5 PM, weekends, and holidays, your call will be transferred to our answering service.
- **SMOKING:** We advise that you do not use any tobacco products for at least 14 days following your surgery.
- **ALCOHOL:** Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and may increase the chance of post-operative bleeding. It also contributes to dehydration. Please do not drink until you have stopped taking the prescription pain pills as this combination can be dangerous.
- **EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT:** It is recommended that you protect the incision lines from the sun for at least one year following surgery. Even with a bathing suit, sunlight can still reach the skin so application of sun screen is recommended.
- **ITCHING:** Benadryl (over the counter): 25-50 mg every 6 hours.
- **GAS:** (caused by pain medication): Phazyme gel tabs.
- **CONSTIPATION:** (Caused by pain medication): Fruit juices, eat canned fruit, Colace or Senecot stool softeners.
- **FEVER:** (without chills or body aches and less than 100 degrees): Two Tylenol every four hours. Look carefully at you incisions for any possible signs of infection.
- **POSTOPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS:** It is very important that you follow the scheduled appointments we establish for you after surgery.

You may continue to use your prescribed narcotic medication as directed. Please ask Dr. Peters prior to initiating any other medications such as Ibuprofen or Vitamin E.

I have reviewed the postoperative care instructions with _____; I understand these instructions and a copy has been provided to me.

Patient _____ Date _____