

Information for Patients Following Cataract Surgery

For post surgery queries or problems please
see phone numbers on next page.

How to contact the eye department after surgery

For post surgery queries or problems,
Monday – Saturday between 09:00 and
17:00,

Call our Eye Triage Team 01392 404955

Alternatively you can leave a **call back
request** with Eye Day Case staff on
01392 406013. Monday - Friday between
07:30 and 17:00.

**Outside of normal eye department
working hours. Please call 111 for
emergencies and urgent queries only.**

No follow up is required.

**An appointment will be sent to
you in**

..... weeks

**Please see your optician 6 weeks
following surgery.**

**You will be listed for cataract
surgery
to the other eye.**

Following a cataract operation

- We suggest you go home and take things easy for the rest of the day.
- You may have one eye covered with a plastic eye shield.
- Four hours after your operation we would like you to wash your hands and remove the shield and any dressing. These can both be thrown away.
- Wash your hands again and then bathe the eyelids with cooled boiled water and clean cotton wool.
- You then need to start your eye drops as instructed.
- If you normally use eye drops for dry eye, please continue these but start a fresh bottle.
- If you normally use eye drops for glaucoma, please continue these but start a fresh bottle. Leave 5 minutes between drops.
- If you have blepharitis, continue with your lid hygiene but be gentle.

It is common for some eyedrops to burn or sting on instillation. You should continue your drops as prescribed. However, if your discomfort seems to be worsening, please contact the Eye Unit. Burning/stinging or a gritty feeling may also be a symptom of dry eyes and artificial tears can be used. These are available from any pharmacy.

What is normal for the next few days?

- Your eye may feel sore or tender.
- You may feel as if there is something in the eye like a lash or piece of grit.
- You may have a slight headache.
- The white of the eye may look red. This may last for up to 2 weeks.
- The eyelids may be puffy or bruised.
- The eye may be watery and have some mucous in the corner.
- You may experience a flickering sensation.
- You may find lights very bright.
- You may experience double vision in the first 24 hours.
- The pupil of the eye may remain dilated for 1-2 days.
- You may be aware that the vision is not balanced.
- You may be more aware of floaters.

All of these things should gradually improve, **NOTHING SHOULD GET WORSE**. If you are at all worried about your eye, you should phone the Cataract Unit immediately.

What is not normal after a cataract operation?

- Pain in or around the eye or a throbbing ache not eased by simple pain killers such as paracetamol.
- If your eye is sticky with a yellow discharge.
- If the eye becomes increasingly red.
- If the eye is feeling gritty and this is getting worse.
- If your eyesight gradually becomes more blurred or there is a loss of vision.
- If you cannot tolerate bright light and this is getting worse.
- Feeling sick in the first 24 hours after the operation.

If you have any of these problems, you must ring the Eye Unit immediately. Please be prepared to come back for a check-up that day.

You should have enough drops to last you a month. You can get a repeat prescription from your General Practitioner (GP). Occasionally people are allergic to the drops. If your eye becomes red, waters a lot or the eye lids swell after you have started using the drops, please ring the eye triage team **or** Eye Day Case unit for advice.

General guidelines following a cataract operation

- Lying on your side in bed, reading or watching television does not harm the eye.
- You cannot strain the eye or wear it out by using it or wearing the wrong prescription glasses.
- Try not to rub or knock the eye after surgery but you may gently wipe or dab around the eye.
- Be careful not to get anything dirty or dusty in the eye whilst on the drops, such as from DIY or gardening.
- You may shower after 24 hours but avoid getting anything in the eye that might irritate it such as soap or shampoo.
- You may use eye make-up with care four weeks after the operation.
- If you enjoy specific hobbies or activities, please ask for advice.
- Most people find that their distance vision improves after surgery. You could try wearing an old pair of prescription glasses or buy an off the shelf pair of reading glasses. Some people may need correction for their distance vision. You will be able to get a new prescription for between 4-6 weeks after your operation.
- As long as you meet the DVLA eyesight requirements, i.e. to be able to read a number plate at a distance of 20 metres, you should be able to drive 48 hours after your surgery. However, your unoperated eye must have full field of vision. Therefore, if the unoperated eye has any eye disease you should discuss the issue of driving with the doctor who assesses you prior to surgery.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by Royal Devon staff undertaking procedures at the Royal Devon hospitals.

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