

# **PATIENT INFORMATION INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING RETINAL SURGERY**

## **Do I need to wear an eye patch?**

You should wear the eye patch for the first night after surgery. You do not need to wear an eye patch after the patch is removed by your doctor one day after surgery. However, we do recommend wearing sunglasses or prescription glasses during the day and a fox shield over the operated eye at night when sleeping for the first week after surgery.

## **Will I have pain after surgery?**

Some discomfort is normal and expected following surgery. The first few days after surgery you may need to use prescription pain pills. Discomfort should gradually decrease and Tylenol, Aspirin or Advil should be sufficient to relieve pain. If the pain is not relieved by Tylenol, call for the On-Call physician (916-734-6603).

## **How much drainage should I expect?**

A moderate amount of drainage during the first week is expected. Gradually, the drainage should decrease. The lids can be cleaned with a clean washcloth, kleenex or cotton ball. Wipe the eyelids gently from the nose outward.

## **Will there be swelling and will my eye be red?**

Some swelling is normal for about a week after which it will gradually decrease. Swelling may worsen or last longer if you are maintaining face down positioning after surgery as instructed by your doctor. The eye will be red after surgery. You should see gradual decreasing redness over the first 3-4 weeks.

## **Will I need to use eye drops?**

You will be given several different kinds of eye drops or ointment (salve) when you leave the hospital. The directions will be on each bottle. The drop with the red top will keep your eye dilated and may make your eye more sensitive to light. Wearing sunglasses may help. The other drop is an antibiotic (possibly combined with steroid) to prevent infection and promote healing. Occasionally a third drop is used to control the pressure in your eye. You will be using eye drops or ointments from four to eight weeks. Bring all eye medications (drops, ointments, or pills) with you to each doctor's visit.

Always wash your hands before putting in the eye drops or ointments. You may wish to have someone else help you. Pull down on the lower lid and squeeze one drop of eye drop or 1/4 inch strip of eye ointment, being careful not to touch the dropper to your eye or eyelid. One drop is sufficient, but another may be used if the first did not go into the eye. Wait 5 to 10 minutes between eye drops to allow the medications to get absorbed into the eye.

## **How long will it take for my vision to improve?**

The first day after surgery often the vision is worse because of eye medication or/and inflammation from surgery. Double vision can occur and will usually resolved over the first few days. Your vision should gradually improve, but it may take up to six months or longer to regain your best vision. Frequently, air or gas bubbles are injected into the eye at the time of surgery. This will blur your vision significantly at first but your vision will gradually improve as the bubble dissipates. You may notice floaters or double vision soon after your surgery. These symptoms usually will decrease with time. If the double vision is bothersome, patching the eye may help.

If you notice a sudden worsening in your vision, call your doctor right away.

### **Are there any physical restrictions after surgery?**

If oil or a gas bubble was placed in the eye during surgery, you will be asked to spend most of your time (both awake and during the night) with your head in a specific position, frequently face down. As the eye heals and the bubble dissipates, there will be less of a need for you to stay in that specific position. You should avoid sleeping on your back until the bubble has totally dissolved or the oil is removed surgically. Please discuss this with your surgeon. In addition, you are restricted from traveling above 1000 feet elevation till the bubble completely dissipates. This last restriction does not apply if you have oil injected.

### **When may I resume normal activities and return to work?**

**Work:** You may return to work in about 1 to 2 weeks. If your work involves physical activity or driving, you will need to restrict your activities and remain home longer. You may watch TV, look at magazines, or work puzzles. Reading may be uncomfortable for several days, but using the eyes will not cause any damage. You may go outside as usual. If conditions are windy or dusty, wear prescription glasses or sunglasses to avoid getting dust or dirt in the eye. **Other Activities:** You may resume most of your activities around the house including most routine chores. However, do not bend below your waist, move suddenly, straining or lifting more than 20 pounds for the first 2 weeks after surgery. Bending should be from the knees, to keep your head above your heart. You may resume sexual activities about two weeks after surgery.

### **Are there any driving restrictions?**

Someone will need to drive you home from the hospital. Generally, driving can be resumed in several days if you have good vision in your other eye. If you do not feel comfortable driving, do not drive! Your depth perception may be decreased, so you will want to try driving during the day in light traffic until you feel comfortable driving. You should restrict your driving while you are taking prescription pain pills as they can affect your judgment.

### **Can I travel?**

You **cannot fly** in an airplane or drive above 1000 feet elevation if you have an air or gas bubble in your eye. Talk to your doctor about the duration of this restriction.

### **When can I shower and wash my hair?**

You may shower or bathe when you get home, but avoid getting water in your eye during the first 2 weeks. You may want someone to help you shampoo your hair at first. Try to shampoo with your head tilted back to avoid getting shampoo or water in your eye.

You may shave, brush your teeth, or comb your hair. Do not use make-up, mascara, or creams/lotions around your eyes for several weeks.

### **When will I see the doctor again?**

Generally, you will be seen at least one day, one week, one month and three months after surgery. Depending on your condition, more frequent visits may be necessary.

### **What if I need other surgery after my eye surgery?**

If you should require any other surgery under general anesthesia within the six weeks after your eye surgery, have your surgeon or anesthesiologist contact us prior to your surgery if a gas bubble was injected in your eye.