

# BLEPHAROPLASTY CARE INSTRUCTIONS

RE PLASTIC SURGERY - MR. LOK HUEI YAP FRCS (PLASTIC SURGERY)

## BEFORE THE OPERATION

1. AVOID ASPIRIN OR ASPIRIN-CONTAINING MEDICATIONS for a period of 7-10 days before surgery, unless there is a strong medical reason for taking Aspirin. Aspirin makes the blood less effective at clotting and may increase bleeding and bruising, as do many other medications with names ending in '-phen' or '-fen'. Please review the enclosed list of medications that may contain aspirin. For mild to moderate pain, Paracetamol is preferred.
2. Stop smoking for at least six weeks before surgery, and ideally discontinue smoking permanently after surgery, as cigarette smoke contains substances including nicotine which act to reduce blood supply in tissues, increasing the risk of wound failure and skin death. Nicotine patches should also be discontinued.
3. Please report any sign of a cough, cold, boils or skin eruptions appearing within one week of surgery. For your own safety, if you have a cough or a cold, the operation will probably be postponed to avoid infective or airways complications.
4. Reduce your alcohol intake in the pre- and post-operative period, as alcohol can have an effect on blood vessels.
5. Most dietary supplements should be discontinued a month before surgery, particularly Vitamin E preparations which can cause increased bleeding and bruising. Vitamin C preparations can be taken after the operation and may help wound healing.
6. Discontinue the oral contraceptive pill for six weeks before surgery and use alternate methods of contraception, to minimize the risks of DVT (deep venous thrombosis).
7. Arrange for someone to drive you home after surgery.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE YOUR OPERATION

1. NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK AFTER MIDNIGHT.
2. Clean off any remaining makeup on your face and eyes and please remove any mascara.
3. Wash your face and eye areas with antibacterial soap.

## THE DAY OF YOUR OPERATION

1. NOTHING TO EAT OR DRINK.
2. Do not take medications, herbal remedies, or supplements, unless they have been prescribed for you.
3. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes that do not have to be pulled over your head.
4. Storage space will be provided for your personal effects, but do not bring valuables with you to the hospital.

## AFTER YOUR OPERATION

1. Arrange for someone you can rely on, to drive you home and spend the first two days with you. Additional instructions and advice can be given to the person looking after you.
2. You will have some mild to moderate discomfort after the procedure and should take regular pain relieving medication (Paracetamol) for the first week after surgery. More significant pain can be managed with oral narcotic medications.
3. **DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN, ASPIRIN-CONTAINING PRODUCTS OR OTHER ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS** (e.g. Ibuprofen, Brufen, Nurofen, Alleve) for two weeks after surgery, as this may cause prolonged bleeding or additional bruising during the early post-operative period.
4. Make sure you have adequate rest for the first few days. Avoid excessive facial movement for the first few days. Do try to keep your head elevated and sleep with two to three pillows for the first two weeks after surgery.
5. Do take your medications as prescribed, particularly your oral antibiotics unless you experience a gastrointestinal disturbance or skin rash. If you are constipated, do take some over-the-counter laxatives. Straining at stool should be avoided, as this may cause an increased risk of bleeding in the wounds.
6. You will have some bandages around your eyes. These are adhesive paper sutures which are mildly water resistant, but please avoid getting the wounds wet for the first week – so if you are washing your face, for example, try to avoid the eye and eye regions.
7. You may find that your eyes feel dry, gritty or puffy. This is quite normal especially if the surgery has involved the regions around the eyes. You may gently clean inside the eye with clean boiled water or salt water solution ('saline' eyedrops) if you find the eye line crusting up.
8. Do make sure that you keep your eyes well lubricated with the eyedrops provided.
9. Please call the Practice to arrange a follow-up appointment for approximately one week after surgery. At this appointment, your wounds will be inspected, and if well-healed you can resume bathing.
10. Avoid activities that will increase your blood pressure, such as vigorous exercise, bending over, straining or lifting heavy objects – these increase your risk of having a significant bleed within the wounds.
11. Avoid alcohol or cigarette smoking for at least 3 weeks after surgery.
12. Mr. Yap will assess your scar and the need for scar therapy. This will start at 2 – 3 weeks post-surgery, if needed, and you will be advised regarding the appropriate scar creams.
13. Do not expose your scars to direct sunlight for 12 months after surgery. Use sunblock with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 15.
14. Avoid hot water bottles or heating pads to your face immediately after surgery, as there will be portions of the face which have reduced sensation, and as such you are at risk of causing a burn. Similarly, when having a shower, take care as you may not realise how hot the water is due to the reduced sensitivity of the skin.
15. Do commence a regular programme of walking around your home, avoiding complete inactivity. Gentle movements and exercises can be commenced a week after surgery.
16. Gym activity or strenuous physical activity should be re-commenced not earlier than 4 weeks after surgery. This return to exercise should be gradual.

17. You should not drive for at least 72 hours after surgery, and even then only if you are confident that you are capable of carrying out an emergency stop.
18. Your level of activity at work will influence when you return to work. Most patients will be able to return to work within 2 weeks if their job is not physically demanding. If you have a more physical occupation, you will require a longer recovery time, typically 4 weeks, before returning to work.

**IF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING OCCUR, PLEASE CALL THE PRACTICE IMMEDIATELY:**

- a) Fresh bleeding from the wound, more than a simple ooze
- b) Rapid enlargement of one or other side of the eyes or face, associated with pain and bruising
- c) Any significant visual disturbance
- d) Significant pain not relieved by simple painkillers
- e) Wound discharge after 48 – 72 hours
- f) Temperature greater than 38.5° C

### WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

1. Your eyes and the areas around your eyes will be tender and swollen for the first 1 – 2 days after surgery.
2. There will be mild to moderate swelling of the eyes and face which will largely resolve by 7 – 10 days. Bruising may occur but should disappear over a period of 1 – 2 weeks.
3. There is usually only one suture to be removed per eyelid.
4. The scars will be healed by about two weeks after surgery but final settling and resolution of the scars may take up to 2 years.

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