After Your Retina Surgery

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Capital Health, Nova Scotia
www.cdha.nshealth.ca

Eye Care Centre
Please bring this booklet to the hospital with you on the day of your operation.
After Your Retina Surgery

After Surgery

- Gas or air injection
- Managing discomfort
- Medication and eye drops
- Activity
- Immediately after surgery
- After one week
- Avoid for 6 weeks
- To be expected
- Eye shield/glasses
- Using eye drops/ointments
- Follow-up appointment
- Contact information
After Your Retina Surgery

After surgery

• If you have a general anaesthetic, you will awaken in the recovery area. A nurse will be checking on you often. You will stay there for an hour or so. You will then be transferred to Day Surgery before being discharged.

• If you have a local anaesthetic, you will go to Day Surgery for an hour or so before being discharged.

If you receive a gas or air injection

• If you receive a gas or air injection during surgery, it is very important to keep lying or sitting in the position your nurse or doctor tells you. This will help your eye heal and is critical to the long-term success of your surgery. Your vision will be very poor while the gas bubble is present. As the bubble is absorbed, you will notice the edge of the bubble in your vision. When the bubble
becomes small, it may break up into 2 or more smaller bubbles. Do not be alarmed. You and your support person will be instructed about your positioning. It is very important for you to maintain this position.

- If you have a gas bubble in your eye, do not fly in an aircraft and do not travel to an area that has an elevation greater than 5000 feet until your eye surgeon says it is OK.

- If you have a gas bubble in your eye and you require a general anaesthetic for another surgery, inform your surgeon and anaesthetist that you have a gas bubble in your eye. Be sure your eye surgeon knows about any other planned surgery.

Managing discomfort

- Some discomfort is normal. You will be given tablets for pain. If you run out of these and still have discomfort take ibuprofen or acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Do not take any ASA products (such as Aspirin™).
Your medication and eye drops

- It is important to keep taking your other regular medications including any eye drops for your other eye.

Activity

- When you are lying down, you must stay in the position as explained by your doctor or nurse. Your doctor will tell you how long you need to do this.
- You must not move quickly or bang or jerk your head.

Immediately after surgery you may:

- Watch TV
- Read
- Use a computer
- **Ride** in a car
- Walk
- Bathe, shower, shave, wash your hair (do not get dirt or soapy water in your eye)

Follow-up Appointment

Keep follow-up visits with your doctor. Bring your medications and eye drops with you to these visits.

Your follow-up appointment with your doctor is on __________________________ at the Eye Care Centre on 2A, Centennial Building, VG Site or in his/her office.

Contact your eye surgeon if you have any troubles after leaving the hospital such as:

- persistent pain
- a decrease in your vision
- excessive swelling
- persistent nausea and vomiting

If you are unable to contact your eye surgeon, call locating at the VG (473-2222) and ask to have the ophthalmology resident paged or go to the nearest Emergency Department.
Using Eye Drops or Ointments

Follow the eye medication schedule given to you by your nurse or doctor.

- Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- Shake the bottle well.
- Tilt your head back. You may sit or lie down.
- Open both eyes and look up. With one finger, draw the lower lid down.
- Place one drop of medicine or bead of ointment into the pocket made when the lower lid is pulled down.
- Do not touch the eyelid or eye with the tip of the bottle.
- Close the eye gently. Keep closed for one full minute. With a tissue, gently remove excess drops from the cheek.
- Wait 5 minutes between drops.
- Do not stop using your drops.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water.

After one week you may:

- Do routine household chores, such as preparing a meal and washing dishes (Do not scrub floors or lift heavy objects).
- Have a hair appointment at a salon.

AVOID the following for 6 weeks after surgery:

- Heavy lifting
- Strenuous exercise or sports
- Swimming
- Straining (avoid becoming constipated). Drink plenty of fluids and eat a healthy diet. If needed, take a mild laxative or stool softener.
- Bending if it causes straining
- Vigorous coughing
- Blowing your nose. Do not try to hold back a sneeze.
Do not

- **Do not** drive your car until your doctor says it is OK.
- **Do not** push, pull or lift anything heavier than 5-10 pounds. Your doctor will tell you when you may resume your usual activities.
- **Do not** resume contact sports until your doctor says it is OK.
- **Do not** return to work until your doctor says it is OK.

This is to be expected

- Your operated eye may be sensitive to the light, be red and swollen, feel scratchy and/or tear off and on. This is normal. It should gradually improve during the first few weeks after surgery.
- Your vision may also be blurry and you may see light flashes or other visual stimuli after surgery. Do not be alarmed.

- It is normal to have a small amount of discharge collect on the edge of the eyelids overnight and during the day. You may remove it by closing your eye and gently wiping the edge of the eyelids. Use a clean wash cloth that has been moistened with clean, warm water. **Do not** rub or touch your eye. You may use a tissue to wipe tears from your cheek.

Eye Shield/Glasses

- **Do not** wear a cotton eye pad at anytime.
- After surgery, you must wear your eye shield at night, until instructed not to by your surgeon.
- Wear regular glasses or sunglasses during the day. Keep either glasses or the shield over your eye for protection.
- If you are on atropine drops, your pupils will stay dilated for a long time. You should wear sunglasses when out in the sun.
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