Orbital Decompression Surgery
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Why do I need orbital decompression surgery?
Patients with thyroid disease (like Grave’s) can have loss of vision. This is caused by damage to the optic nerve. The eye muscles get larger than usual and deform the eyes. Surgery may be needed to correct this. During surgery, the doctor removes a large part of the bony wall in the orbit to make more room for the larger muscles and help reduce bulging of the eyes. Surgery can lead to a more natural appearance. It will help decrease the pressure on the optic nerve, if present.

Before Surgery
Please read the “Getting Ready for Eye Surgery” booklet.

Please call the eye surgeon’s office before surgery if you are taking:

- ANY type of blood thinners such as ASA (Aspirin®), warfarin, Advil® (ibuprofen) etc.
- Any type of vitamins and/or herbal therapies such as multi-vitamins, green tea, garlic, Chinese herbs, Vitamin E or gingko.

If needed, an appointment will be made for you at the Pre-Admission clinic.

Call your eye surgeon right away if you have:
- Decrease in vision.
- Sudden increase in pain, redness or swelling after 36 hours.
- Large amount of nausea and vomiting.
- Unusual drainage from the incision.

If you are unable to contact your eye surgeon, call 473-2222. Ask the hospital operator to page the ophthalmology resident, OR go to the nearest Emergency Department.

We are here to help you. Do not hesitate to ask us any questions.
During Surgery
• The surgery will be done under general anaesthetic (you will be asleep during the surgery).
• The surgery will take about 2-3 hours.
• You will likely stay in the hospital overnight after this surgery.

After Surgery
• You will have an eye pad over your eye. The doctor will remove this the day after the surgery, before you go home.
• The nurses will put an ice pack over your eye for the first 48 hours. It will be put on your eye for 10 minutes and then taken off for 20 minutes. This will only be done while you are awake.
• You may be given some medications to help decrease the swelling around your eye and help with pain or nausea if needed.

At Home
• Expect a small amount of bloody drainage around the eye for up to 2 days after surgery. Bruising and/or swelling around the eye(s) and cheek is normal for up to 2 weeks after surgery.
• You will be given a prescription for eye ointment. Put it on the wound(s) every day as prescribed after the eye pad has been removed.
• Continue to use the icepacks at home. Put it on the eye for 10 minutes and then take it off for 20 minutes. Do this while you are awake for up to 48 hours after surgery.
• Keep your head elevated on three pillows for the first two nights.
• **DO NOT** blow your nose for one week
• Avoid heavy lifting for one week.
• **Do not swim in a public or private pool for 2 weeks after surgery.**

Controlling Discomfort
• It is normal to feel some pain when the freezing wears off. Take acetaminophen with codeine (Tylenol # 3), 1 or 2 tablets up to 4 to 6 times a day, as prescribed by the doctor.
• If you feel sick to your stomach, you can take Gravol® as instructed.

When will I see my surgeon after surgery?
• You will be given a time to visit your surgeon at the hospital in about one week after surgery.
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