

# THE STERN CENTER

FOR AESTHETICS

## Post-operative Instructions for Eyelid Surgery (Blepharoplasty)

The first few days after surgery can be very unsettling if you're not sure what to expect. By letting you know the normal post-operative course, and how to take care of yourself properly, you should feel more confident that you're doing everything you can do to help in your healing. Our goal is to make your recovery as safe, comfortable and carefree as possible. Rest assured that with each passing day, you will feel better, and your symptoms will subside. You can speed your recovery by following our directions carefully.

The first few days after surgery, most people experience mild to moderate irritation and discomfort in and around the eyes. This is usually accompanied by swelling and some bruising of the eyelids, cheeks and face.

It is quite common for the eyes to remain slightly open when you blink, or during sleep, for the first several days as well. This is due to tightness of the lids and swelling. This may make your eyes feel dry and blur your vision temporarily. Blurred vision is quite common after eyelid surgery and may continue throughout the first week after surgery. It is frequently due to a combination of factors, including, as noted above, dry eyes, tight lids, swelling, and ointments that seep into the eye.

Swelling is usually at its peak on the second and third post-operative day and is often mild to moderate. This gradually improves over subsequent weeks. If the surgical area becomes extremely swollen (ping-pong ball size), or if the swelling becomes very tense and firm, this is abnormal, and you should call Dr. Stern.

You should also expect slight oozing of blood or blood-tinged fluid from the incisions or eyes the first day or two after surgery. This is normal. Should there be excessive bleeding, for example, enough to soak an entire washcloth, this is not normal and you should notify Dr. Stern immediately.

**1. Cold Compresses**- This is the most important thing for you to do the first two days after your surgery. Prepare cold compresses ahead of time using small bags of frozen peas or gel packs. Apply it to your eyelids for fifteen minutes every hour or so while you're awake.

**2. Ointment**- Apply the antibiotic ointment to your incisions 3-4 times each day until you are instructed otherwise by Dr. Stern. You may also put this ointment in your eyes at bedtime to lubricate them while you sleep, if necessary.

3. Eyedrops- If you were prescribed medicated drops, use these four times a day for 5 days. If no prescription drops were given, use artificial tears four times a day to keep the eyes from drying, if necessary.

4. Activity- The most important thing to remember is not to overdo it the first couple of days after surgery. Sitting up or resting with your head elevated on an extra pillow helps reduce swelling and bleeding. It is OK to walk if you feel up to it. Watching TV or reading is also OK, but your vision will likely be more blurred than usual for a few days. Avoid bending over and lifting anything more than about 20 lbs. Vigorous exercise should be avoided for approximately ten days following surgery.

5. Pain Medication- You may try extra strength Tylenol, but if that doesn't work well enough, take the pain medication as prescribed by Dr. Stern. Remember that most prescription pain medications will cause nausea on an empty stomach, so be sure and have at least a light snack prior to taking your medicine.

6. Showering and Washing- It is OK to shower the day after surgery. You may let the water run on your eyelids, but do not scrub your lids-- doing so may loosen the stitches. Gently pat the lids dry with a clean washcloth and apply the antibiotic ointment.

7. Makeup- Makeup may be worn safely 5 days after the sutures are removed.

If you have any questions or concerns, call us at the office at (425) 455-9100. If you have an after-hours emergency, you may reach Dr. Stern directly at: 425-628-7720.

These instructions have been explained to me. I understand it is my responsibility to follow them and have been given a copy for reference.