

Patient information

Cataract – Postoperative Care

Will my eye be covered after the operation?

Depending on the surgical details of your operation, some eyes will not be covered, and some will either have a clear plastic shield or eye pad. If you have a shield or pad, you will be given instructions on when this should be worn and when to start your eye drops.

How will my eye feel after the operation?

As the anaesthetic wears off there can be a dull ache or gritty feeling. Sometimes there can be a sharp or more intense pain, but this usually settles overnight. You may want to use normal pain-relief tablets when you get home. Your eyelid may be bruised, swollen, or sticky, and you may need to clean the lids to allow them to open. Please use cooled boiled water and a cotton pad. It is common for the eye to look red or bloodshot, be watery, and for the vision to be very blurred. All of this is completely normal after the operation. Your eye usually settles down over the coming days to weeks and your vision should improve continuously.

How do I put in the eye drops?

Before you leave the eye unit you will be given advice on how to put drops in. You can watch an instructional video here by scanning the QR code or visiting the web page below:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgodZZ2N2wY



The eye drops reduce the risk of infection and inflammation after surgery and are necessary usually for three or more weeks after the operation. Please follow your individual instructions carefully.



What am I allowed to do after surgery?

Post-operatively it is safe to use your eyes for things like reading and watching television straight away. You are also able to touch and clean your eye, have a shower, and wash your hair. For 1 week after surgery **please try and avoid getting water directly into the eye, immersing your head underwater, or using mascara.**

You are fine to do most other things as normal, including bending, lifting, and going to the gym, but please **avoid firmly rubbing the eye for 1 week.**

If you feel that you are able to perform your job then you may return to work a day or two after your operation. If you find that you are sensitive to light you can use a normal pair of sunglasses.

If you are a driver you can return to driving as soon as you feel confident that you can see a car number plate at 20 metres, without double vision, and meet the usual DVLA standards:

www.aop.org.uk/advice-and-support/for-patients/driving-and-vision-standards



When do I have my post-operative check and when can I update my spectacles?

Most patients will have their post-operative check by their local optometrist and will need to organise to see their optometrist 4 to 8 weeks after surgery. On occasion this follow-up may be with the hospital eye clinic. Your optometrist will check the eye has healed well after surgery, will let the hospital know the surgery results, and organise new glasses at the same visit. Nearly all patients will need glasses for at least some visual tasks after cataract surgery e.g. driving or reading, and you will probably not achieve your best vision until you have your new glasses. If this is your first eye operation, and you are expecting the second eye to be operated, then your optometrist will assist with organising this.

After surgery, before seeing your optometrist, you may find that your old glasses are the wrong prescription, and you may have trouble with near or distance vision. If you need extra help for reading, then using your old glasses may be enough, despite being the wrong prescription. If your old glasses are not helpful, then buying cheap over-the-counter reading glasses may help until you have seen your optometrist. If you have a big difference in prescription between your two eyes, sometimes removing the

lens from the glasses on the side that has been operated may help until you see your optometrist.

What to look out for and what to do if there are problems

You should seek help quickly if the pain, redness, or blurred vision is getting worse rather than better, or becomes very severe. If you experience any of the above, or you are worried about your eye in any way, please contact us on the numbers below:

Daytime:

Out of Hours (Emergency Only):