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**AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS for BLEPHAROPLASTY (Eyelid Surgery)**

**MEDICATIONS**

- BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE, YOU WILL NEED TO PURCHASE TWO EYE PRODUCTS FROM YOUR PHARMACY: EYE LUBRICANT *DROPS*, AND EYE LUBRICANT *OINTMENT*.
  - Good options are: **Artificial Tears Lubricant eye drops** and **Artificial Tears Lubricant eye ointment**, but other brands may be used also.
- Place 1 to 2 drops of the lubricating eye **drops** into each eye every 2 to 4 hours for the first 2 days, or if your eyes feel dry.
- Place the lubricating eye **ointment** into each eye (*gently* pull down your lower eyelid and place a thin strip between the lower eyelid and your eyeball) before going to sleep for the first 3 days, longer if your eyelid does not close completely, or if your eyes feel dry.
- You may be prescribed narcotic pain medication, which you should take as directed and as needed for pain. Do not exceed the prescribed amount, unless instructed by your surgeon.
- Wean yourself off narcotic medication as soon as you are able.
- Take over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) on a scheduled basis (Ex.: 650mg every 4 hours, or 1000mg every 6 hours) starting on your day of surgery. *If you have liver problems, do not take acetaminophen, unless you have discussed this with your doctor.*
- DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN 4000 mg of acetaminophen per a day.
- Your narcotic medication may also contain acetaminophen, so you need to be aware of your total dose from all medications you are using.
- Ibuprofen (ie. Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) may be started *the day after* your surgery and may be used together with your narcotic pain medications and/or with acetaminophen. *However, do not use ibuprofen or naproxen if you have had problems with stomach ulcers, kidney problems or if you have been told by a doctor not to use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).*
- Wean yourself off acetaminophen and/or ibuprofen/naproxen as soon as you are able.
- Purchase an over-the-counter stool softener (Metamucil, Colace) while taking narcotic pain medication. This helps avoid constipation.
- You may resume taking your routine medications, unless your physician instructs you differently.

**DIET**

- You should resume your normal diet gradually.

**ACTIVITY**

- **IMPORTANT: To decrease the risk of blood clots after surgery, you should walk regularly, and flex your calf muscles. Except during your normal sleeping time, get up and walk around for at least 5 minutes every hour.**
- **SHOWER:** You may shower 1 day after surgery. DO NOT soak, take a tub bath, swim, or whirlpool for 3 weeks or if there are any openings in the incision.
- **SLEEPING:** For the 3 days, sleep with your head & shoulders elevated on at least 2 pillows to help reduce swelling.
- **Avoid bending over for the first week after surgery.**

- **VISUAL AIDS:** Wear glasses after surgery.
  - Contacts may be worn when your eyes start feeling normal and most of the swelling has resolved, usually about ONE WEEK AFTER SURGERY. If it is necessary to pull down or up on your eyelid to insert them, they should NOT BE WORN FOR 10 DAYS.
- Cosmetics may be worn as early as 3 days after surgery. However, EYELID OR EYELASH COSMETICS SHOULD BE AVOIDED UNTIL 2 DAYS AFTER EYELID SUTURES HAVE BEEN REMOVED.
- Do **NOT** push, pull, or lift anything heavier than 20 pounds (about the weight of a 2 gallons of milk) for 1 week.
- Do **NOT** do any strenuous activity or exercise/ activities (running, weightlifting, aerobics, vacuuming) for 2 weeks. After you start exercising, go slowly over 1 to 2 weeks until you are comfortable with more strenuous exercises.
- Do **NOT** drive or handle heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medication or muscle relaxant medications.
- Do **NOT** drive until you feel comfortable, and you are not experiencing “blurry” vision.

### **INCISION & SCAR MANAGEMENT**

- Apply a thin layer of Vaseline ointment or antibiotic ointment to the incisions with a Q-tip 3 times a day for 3 days only. If you have tape on your incision, do NOT apply anything, and leave the tape in place.
- Apply a cool pack (NOT ICE) to the eyelids as often as possible for the first 2 days. You may purchase a gel cooling pack or use moist hand towels stored in a refrigerator.
- See Incision and Scar Care Instructions for scar prevention. Silicone gel ointment is recommended for upper eyelid incisions after the sutures are removed. Lower eyelid incisions typically do not need scar treatment.

### **WHAT ELSE TO EXPECT**

- Minor bleeding from the incisions and swelling and bruising of the eyelids.
  - If the swelling on one side is **significantly** more pronounced than on the other side, if you have a continuous bloody drip or if you are experiencing pain which is not relieved by pain medication, call your surgeon immediately.
- Tightness of the eyelid is normal after surgery. This may make it hard for you to close your eyelids completely. Your eyelids will relax with time.
- You may have some discomfort for 1 to 2 weeks, although it should gradually get better after the first 2 to 3 days.
- If there are any sutures, they will be removed in 3 to 7 days after your procedure.
- Incisions are usually thin at first, become somewhat thick and red for up to 6 weeks, and then begin to fade. It usually takes up to 1 year before final scar appearance is established.

### **WHEN TO CALL DR. GUTOWSKI or DR. MARTIN**

- Fever over 101.5 for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Any significant vision changes (some blurry vision is expected for a few days).
- Marked increase in redness, swelling, or pain around an incision.
- Excessive bleeding or drainage from your incisions.
- Pain that is not relieved by recommended medication.
- Persistent problems with nausea or vomiting.
- CHEST PAIN or TROUBLE BREATHING: CALL 911 or go to an Emergency Room