

Cataract Surgery



UHN

Instructions for Patients Going Home After Cataract Surgery

Do not drive a car or drink alcohol for 24 hours.

What is cataract surgery?

One of the most common problems that can affect vision is a cataract. A cataract happens when the lens in your eye becomes cloudy (usually because of aging). During cataract surgery the doctor removes the clouded lens and replaces it with a clear artificial lens.

What can I eat and drink after my operation?

You can go back to eating and drinking what you normally would right away.

How much activity is safe?

- You can go back to your normal activities when you feel ready.
- You can bend, stoop, cough and sleep on any side you wish, bath, shave, walk outside, watch TV and go for rides in the car.
- Do NOT do strenuous or tiring activities like swimming, jogging, aerobics or gardening.
- Do NOT do any activity that might put a lot of pressure or strain on your eye (for example lifting heavy objects over 5 kilograms or 10 pounds)
- Do NOT swim, use hot tubs and steam rooms until the surgeon says otherwise.
- Your surgeon will tell you when you can return to work, play sports and drive a vehicle.

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When to shower or bathe and how to wash your eye

- You may bathe or shower as normal in 24 hours.
- Do NOT get water or soap in your eye; keep your eye closed while you shower.
- Use a clean washcloth and normal tap water to clean secretions from your lashes or the corner of your eye.
- Do NOT wash your eye with any commercial washes.

How to take care of your wound

- If you go home with a patch and shield, do not touch it until you see your surgeon the following day.
- You may be instructed to remove the shield to give yourself the prescribed eye drops. Do this only if instructed.
- It is normal for your eye to be red, uncomfortable, sensitive to light, teary, and blurred after your surgery. These symptoms should slowly get better over the next few days and weeks.
- You do not have to wear a patch, unless your surgeon asked you to.
- Your vision will start to get better within a few days, but it can take up to 8 weeks to fully heal.
- To protect your operated eye during the day, wear your regular glasses or sunglasses when you go outside.
- At night (if your surgeon tells you to) wear the plastic shield that was given to you from the hospital. Wear the shield at night **only** until your doctor tells you to stop.
- Keep the shield clean by washing it with soap and water every day.
- Do not rub, press or let anything touch your eye.
- Use a clean tissue or facecloth to remove any discharge.

How do I cope with pain?

- It is normal to feel itching and mild discomfort for a couple of days after your surgery. This will get better with time.
- If your eye is uncomfortable, take the medication that was prescribed to you by your surgeon or take Tylenol Extra Strength® as directed on the bottle.
- Do not take Aspirin® (ASA) or products that contain ASA unless your surgeon has told you to.

Information about your eye drops

- You may get a prescription for eye drops or eye ointment.
- Take the prescription to a pharmacy to have it filled and follow the directions for taking the eye drop medication.
- Bring your eye drop medication to all of your follow-up appointments.
- If you do not know how to give yourself eye drops ask the nurse for the 'Eye Drops' pamphlet.

When to start your eye drops

(please be sure that we check off ✓ one of these two options below)

- Start your eye drops as soon as you get home today. If you have a shield, remove it to give yourself the drops and then tape it back on.
- Start your eye drops tomorrow (after your follow-up appointment with your surgeon).

Taking your regular medications

If you have not taken your regular daily medication, take them as soon as you get home today.

Watch for these problems

Call your surgeon or call **416-340-3155** and ask to speak to the Ophthalmology (eye) Resident on call or go to the nearest emergency department if you have the following:

- Pain that continues even after taking over-the-counter pain medication
- A gush of fluid from the operated eye
- Light flashes or multiple spots (floaters) in front of your eye
- Vision loss or no vision in the operated eye
- A fever (a temperature of more than 38°C or 101°F)
- Increased redness in your eye
- Nausea (upset stomach), vomiting or a lot of coughing
- Purulent discharge (green or yellow liquid coming from your eye)

Follow-up appointment

Your surgeon will see you in the office the day after your surgery, unless instructed they told you differently. If you don't have a follow-up appointment, call the office to make an appointment.

