

# After Your Vitrectomy or Scleral Buckle

## For patients going home after day surgery at Toronto Western Hospital

Read this brochure to learn more about:

- how to take care of your eye
- what activities are safe to do
- what head position to keep after surgery
- problems to watch for
- how to cope with pain
- when to see your surgeon for a follow-up visit



**Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours.**

**Have a responsible adult stay with you overnight.**



## What is a scleral buckle or vitrectomy?

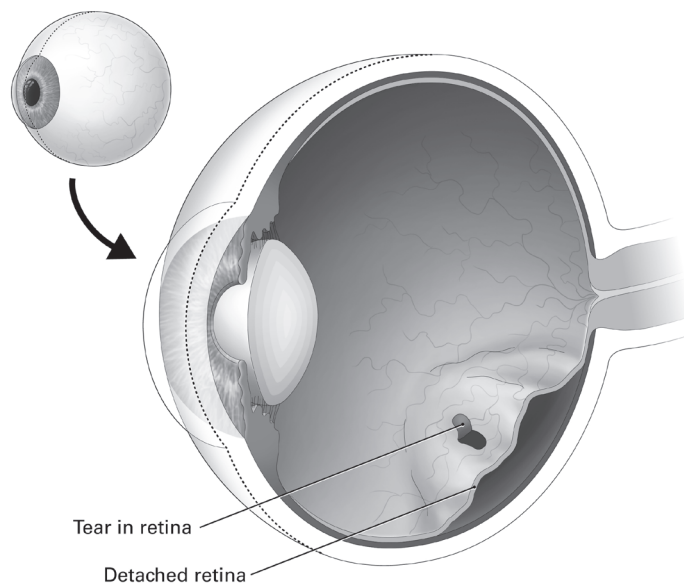
A scleral buckle or vitrectomy is a way of treating a **retinal detachment**. A retinal detachment can happen when you have a tear or a break in your retina (the inner coating of your eyeball).

A tear or break in your retina can be caused by:

- diabetes
- a serious injury to the head or eye
- aging

A retinal detachment can seriously affect your eyesight. But new ways of repairing this condition can help you to see better.

Inside your eye:





## What can I eat and drink after my surgery?

You can go back to eating and drinking what you normally would. Slowly start by having fluids and soups on the day of the surgery. Then return to your normal diet the next day.

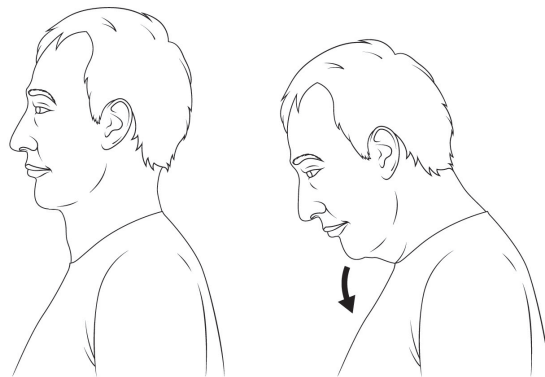
If you are feeling nauseated (sick to your stomach) or vomiting, you can:

- Get anti-nausea medication from your pharmacy without a prescription (such as Gravol, taken as a pill or rectally).
- Take Gravol as directed and drink fluids until the nausea passes. Then gradually return to your normal diet.

## How should I position my head after the surgery?

You may have a gas or air bubble in your eye. If you do, keep your head in the position that your nurse or doctor checked off below.

- No special head position for you.
- Keep your head positioned with the \_\_\_\_\_ side down.
- When you are lying down or sleeping, always lie on your \_\_\_\_\_ side.
- Keep your head face down (with your chin lowered to your chest). Stay in this position for as long as you can.



It is very important that you keep your head in this position for the whole day and night.

You can straighten your head:

- to eat
- to go to the bathroom
- to receive eye drops

**Don't straighten your head for more than 10 to 15 minutes at a time.**

Your surgeon will let you know how many days to keep your head in a certain position.

There are special devices that help you keep your head in the right position. Ask your surgeon if there is one that's best for you.



## **How much activity is safe?**

You can go back to your normal activities when you feel ready. Always remember to keep your head in the correct position (see the information above).

Some regular activities that you can do include:

- walking
- bending at the knees
- coughing
- watching TV
- reading
- going for rides in the car

If you normally wear glasses, you can continue to wear them (unless your surgeon has told you not to).



## Things you should NOT do

- No tiring physical activities (such as swimming, jogging, aerobics, having sex)
- Do not drive a car
- Do not bend over or stoop (it is safe to bend at the knees)
- Do not put pressure on or straining your eye
- Do not rub your eye or let anything touch it
- Don't lift anything heavier than 5 kg (10 lbs)
- Do not travel by plane (your surgeon will tell you when you can do so again)
- Do not wash your eye with any store-bought eyewashes

**Your surgeon will tell you when you can drive again, go back to work, and play sports.**



## How can I wash my eye or take showers or baths?

- You can have a shower or bath 24 hours after your surgery.
- Use a clean washcloth every time and normal tap water to clean secretions from your lashes or the corner of your eye.
- When you shower or wash your hair, keep your eye closed to keep water and soap out.

## How do I take care of my eye?

- Do not touch your eye patch or rub your eye after the surgery. Your surgeon will take the patch off at your next appointment.
- After surgery, it is normal for your eye to be:
  - red
  - uncomfortable
  - sensitive to light or teary
- These symptoms will slowly get better over the next few days and weeks.
- Wear your glasses during the day. Wear sunglasses when you go outside.
- At night, wear the plastic shield (if your surgeon tells you to). Wear the shield at night until your surgeon tells you it's safe to stop. The shield protects your eye.



**Your retina wound will take 6 to 8 weeks to heal.**



## How can I cope with pain?

It is normal to have pain after this surgery. The pain should get better in a few days.

If your eye is uncomfortable, take the medication that was prescribed to you by your surgeon or take Tylenol Extra Strength and follow the instructions on the bottle.

- Do not take Aspirin (ASA) or products that contain ASA unless your surgeon has told you it is OK. If you take Aspirin every day, ask your surgeon when to restart it.
- If your surgeon instructed you to soothe your eye with an ice pack to keep the swelling down, you can put the ice pack on your eye every hour for 20 minutes. (You do not have to do this at night). You can use a store-bought ice pack, or a bag of frozen vegetables or crushed ice in a plastic bag.

## **When can I take my usual medications?**

If you have not taken your usual daily medication, take it as soon as you get home.

## **What if I get constipated?**

Pain medication can make you constipated. If you have two or less bowel movements a week or if you have trouble having a bowel movement then you are constipated.

### **To prevent constipation or straining:**

- Drink 3 to 5 glasses of water every day (each glass should be about 8 ounces ).
- Eat foods that are high in fibre (such as bran and fruit).
- If you have not had a bowel movement for 3 days, take Milk of Magnesia and follow the instructions on the bottle. You can buy this from your pharmacy without a prescription.

## **How should I use my eye drops?**

You might get a prescription for eye drops, either on the day you have your surgery or at your next appointment.

- Take the prescription to a pharmacy to have it filled. Follow the instructions on the bottle.
- Bring the drops with you to your follow-up appointment the next day.
- Start using the drops when your surgeon has taken off the eye patch.
- Always wash your hands with soap and water before putting drops in your eye.
- If you're not sure how to give yourself eye drops, ask the nurse for the "Eye drops" pamphlet.



## **Watch for these problems**

**Call your surgeon or family doctor, or come to the Toronto Western Hospital emergency department.**

**If you are from out of town, go to the nearest emergency department if any of these problems happen to you:**

- Pain that gets worse in the operated eye that does not get better after taking pain medication
- A complete loss of vision
- Swelling that is getting worse
- Uncontrolled or serious vomiting that doesn't get better after taking Gravol®
- A fever (a temperature higher than 38° C or 101° F)
- A gush of fluid from your eye
- Green or yellow pus coming from the operated eye





## My follow-up appointment

Your surgeon will see you in the office the day after surgery, unless instructed differently. If you do not have a follow-up appointment, call the office to schedule one. Remember to bring your health card (OHIP card) to all your follow-up appointments.

<input type="checkbox"/> Dr. Devenyi	416 603 5602	East Wing – 6 <sup>th</sup> floor (room 438)
<input type="checkbox"/> Dr E. Mandelcorn	416 603 5418	East Wing – 6 <sup>th</sup> floor (room 415)
	905 761 7002	2180 Steeles Ave W (suite 221)
<input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dr M. Mandelcorn	416 603 5885	East Wing – 6 <sup>th</sup> floor (room 416)
<input type="checkbox"/> Dr P. Yan	416 928 1335	340 College St – 5 <sup>th</sup> floor (suite 501)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

