



Glaucoma: Trabeculectomy Ahmed Valve

POST-SURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions are for patients recovering from one of the following eye surgeries:

- Cataract surgery combined with trabeculectomy
- Trabeculectomy
- Ahmed Tube Shunt
- Baerveldt Tube Shunt
- Bleb revision or needling

This information is designed to give you an overview of your surgery and postoperative course, and how you can manage your care and recovery at home. However it is not intended to be exhaustive, so if you do have further questions please feel free to ask us. It generally takes six to eight weeks for the eye to heal and for you to completely recover from eye surgery, although everyone recovers at a different pace.

(Important: If you have constant, or increasing, tearing or pooling of fluid in the eye, typically in the morning, let us know immediately. These symptoms may indicate a wound leak which will need to be treated quickly.)

Here are some effects you can anticipate:

- Your eye may be red and irritated after surgery and you may find that it tears more than usual.
- Some patients are able to return to many of their normal activities, but we advise that you refrain from lifting heavy objects, straining, and bending, for at least four weeks.
- You may experience some blurriness for a month or two after surgery but this will clear, eventually.
- Vision may improve for some patients, depending on the type of medication they take. On rare occasions, other patients may experience loss of vision because of low pressures in their eye. In either case, we may have to change your prescription for glasses.
- If your surgery involved the creation of a bleb, we will work with you to prevent infection. We may recommend that you avoid wearing contact lenses.
- We may ask you to come in frequently after your surgery so that we can check how well fluid is draining out of your eye. We may cut or pull the stitches around your bleb to change the flow of fluid, or ask you to press in a specific way on your eye to help improve flow.

It is important to follow our instructions about how to care for your eyes after surgery. We will work with you to develop the best strategies for your particular needs. This will help you recover quickly and minimize your risk for complications or discomfort.

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Recovery tips

- Surgery can be stressful. Try to schedule your obligations so that you are not overburdened with chores during your recovery.
- After surgery, expect to feel better and stronger each day -- but you may get tired more easily or have less energy than usual.
- Arrange for help at home after surgery, especially if you live alone or provide care for another person.
- Rest when you feel tired and sleep sufficiently. This will help you recover.
- Wear your glasses during the day. Wear your eye shield (do not put the gauze under the shield as this could give you an eye abrasion) at night for two weeks or for as long as we recommend.
- Wear sunglasses on bright days for comfort after surgery.
- If this is comfortable for you, sleep with one or two pillows under your head for the first week after surgery
- Do not bend over or do any straining or strenuous activities. Only resume activities as advised.
- Do not wear contact lenses until we advise you that it is safe to do so.
- Do not wear eye makeup for four weeks after surgery. You may also want to avoid face cream or lotion.
- You can shower or wash your hair the day after surgery, but keep water, soap, shampoo, hair spray, and shaving lotion out of your eye, especially for the first four weeks. Make sure to not get a stream of fluid in the eye directly if you shower.
- Do not get your hair colored or treated for seven days after surgery and after that take care to have your eye covered or closed during hair appointments. We recommend that you schedule hair treatments before your surgery.
- Do not swim, sit in hot tubs or saunas, garden, or do house cleaning tasks, such as dusting, for four weeks.
- Do not lift weights, do yoga, jump, run or participate in other strenuous activities; do not strain, do not bend.

Eye Medications

- We will design a medicine schedule to keep you comfortable and protect against infection after your surgery.
- Only use eye medications while you are awake; it is not necessary to interrupt your sleep to administer medications.
- When using multiple eye medications, remember to wait 3-5 minutes between drops of different medications. Do not use them all at the same time -- this will cause the medications to be diluted and overflow out of the eye.
- You can administer medications in any order -- it does not matter which one you use first.
- Always wash your hands before instilling your eye medications or touching near your eyes.
- If you need additional lubrication between these medication drops, use artificial tears.
- Your plan will look something like this:

Prednisolone 1%

Instill 1 drop every 2 hours for _____ week (s) then

Instill 1 drop 4 times a day for _____ week (s) then

Instill 1 drop 2 times a day for _____ week (s) then

Instill 1 drop 1 times a day for _____ week (s) then stop.

(We will tell you the exact dosage before you go home after your surgery)

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Zymar:

Instill 1 drop every 2 hours for 2 weeks then stop. Do not discard the medication as you may be asked to resume it again.

Voltaren:

Instill 1 drop 3-4 times a day for 4 weeks then stop.

Atropine:

Instill 1 drop 3 times a day for _____ weeks then stop.

How to use eye drops

- Always wash your hands before you put your drops in or use eye ointment.
- Tilt your head back or lie down and pull your lower eyelid down with one finger.
- Drop the medicine inside the lower lid.
- Close your eye for three minutes to let the drops get absorbed into the eye.
- Wait five minutes before you administer another eye drop into the eye.
- Do not touch the ointment or dropper tip to your eyelashes or any other surface.

Pain Medication

- Take pain medicine as needed, following the directions carefully. Do not wait until you are in severe pain. You will get better results if you take it sooner.
- Do not take more than one pain medicine that contains acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) at the same time. Many over-the-counter and prescription medicines contain Tylenol. Too much Tylenol can be dangerous. Check the labels carefully.
- To avoid an upset stomach, take your pain pills with food.
- After surgery, resume your regular medicines again.
- Avoid constipation and straining.

Eye Shield

- When sleeping, wear the eye shield taped over your operated eye for at least two weeks. Do not put gauze under it -- you could scratch your cornea.
- Tape the sides of the shield to the skin, placing the shield on the bony parts around the eye.
- Don't tape over the center of the shield so you can see through the small holes in the shield.
- To avoid injury do not let the shield slip into the eye.
- Do not wear contact lenses after surgery.
- Wear glasses.

Driving

- For your safety, drive only if you feel able to see well enough to respond to the demands of driving.
- If you feel uncertain, do not drive.

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After your trabeculectomy

- If you had a trabeculectomy, Ahmed valve/ Baerveldt tube shunt or a combination surgery that included one of these, excessive post-surgery tearing could mean that there is a complication from the surgery. If you experience excessive tearing or pooling of fluid in the eye, let us know.
- The bleb in your eye will probably be covered by your upper eyelid and will not be visible. If you lift up your eyelid you will be able to see it. If the tissue sags in the future because of scarring it may begin to cross into your cornea. We will give you eye drops and may prescribe medicines to prevent the bleb from scarring. We also may provide injections around the eye to minimize scarring.

Resuming Normal Activity

- You may resume normal activity gradually, but do not bend, strain, or lift for four weeks or longer. A good rule of thumb to know if you are bending too much is to keep your head above your heart level. You may have to squat to do so and to prevent problems after your surgery.
- Do not rub or touch your eye unless we tell you to do so.
- You may be able to return to desk work or your non-physical routine one to two weeks after surgery.
- We may ask you to increase or decrease your activity to help with the healing process.
- If you have a cataract, it may worsen and you may need cataract surgery at a later date. However lowering the eye pressure will make this surgery safer.
- Your eyes may be blurry for up to eight weeks after surgery. As this goes away, your vision will probably be as good as it was before surgery. But you may need to change your prescription for your glasses or contact lenses.
- Certain kinds of glasses may be better for your eye after this surgery. You may need to change your glasses after surgery. There is a possibility that you may not be able to wear contacts after this surgery. Wearing contacts may be too uncomfortable and could put you at increased risk for infecting the bleb.

Preventing Future Infections

- Even many years after your trabeculectomy, you may be at increased risk for developing an internal eye infection, known as blebitis.
- An infection can lead to loss of vision in severe cases, so it's important to contact us if you have any symptoms that suggest infection.
- Know the signs of infection which can include, but are not limited to, redness, pain, discharge and change in vision.
- We may ask you to keep antibiotics on hand in case you travel to an area without good health care facilities.
- If you think you have an infection, contact us immediately.
- If you are traveling and cannot be seen by an eye doctor, begin taking your antibiotic eye drops and see an eye doctor as soon as you can.

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist.

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Follow-up Care

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. As an active participant in your health care, it's important that you keep all scheduled appointments, and keep an up-to-date list of the medicines you are taking. You can contact us between visits by calling our Appointment and Advice Call Center. The call center can also connect you with a nurse if you need immediate advice about your eye. Our advice nurses are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you have any of the following symptoms or issues after your surgery please **contact us right away**:

- You are sick to your stomach or cannot keep fluids down.
- You have severe eye pain (remember that some discomfort after the surgery is normal but pain medication should be sufficient to control it)
- Your eyes are swollen
- You have pus or discharge draining from your eye.
- Your vision suddenly gets worse.
- Your eye gets red or the redness is not improving.
- You are not feeling better day by day.
- You have problems with your medicine.

If you think you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911 immediately or seek other emergency services. Examples of symptoms that may indicate you need emergency medical attention include losing consciousness (passing out, or fainting), having severe trouble breathing and/or chest pain.

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