

Information for patients and carers

Post-operative Care Following Squint Surgery

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of three overlapping, wavy horizontal bands in shades of blue, ranging from a light sky blue to a dark navy blue.

This leaflet is primarily written for the benefit of patients who have just had squint surgery, with large type for easier reading. You may have had surgery on one or both eyes.

After the operation

You have had an operation under general anaesthetic on one or more of your eye muscles, each eye has six muscles which can be accessed easily through the conjunctiva (white membrane surrounding the eyeball). The position of the muscle(s) has been changed to reposition your eyes.

Each eye which had been operated on is likely to look red and swollen and feel gritty and sore after the operation. This is normal and will gradually go away within the first week or two. If required, you can relieve this by taking pain relief medication such as paracetamol. However, if you are already taking pain relief medication for a different condition, please continue with that but **do not take both**.

Normally the eye(s) is not padded or covered after the operation, your tears may be blood-stained which is common for the first few days.

Immediately after the operation the vision of the operated eye(s) may be blurred this is common and usually improves quickly.

Once you have been discharged from the ward you should rest for the remainder of the day, you may find it more comfortable to wear sunglasses to protect your eyes on the way home.

You will be given antibiotic and anti-inflammatory eye drops to use four times a day for around four weeks.

Stitches

In most cases the stitches used will naturally dissolve over a period of 6-8 weeks. Occasionally a permanent stitch is needed, in which case you will be advised about its removal.

In some cases, an adjustable stitch is used so that a final adjustment of your eye position can be made when the general anaesthetic has worn off, this will have been discussed and agreed with you in advance. Once the adjustment has been done the stitch will naturally dissolve.

Glasses and Contact Lenses

If your glasses were prescribed to correct your vision, then you should continue to wear these as normal.

If you had a prism on your glasses or built into your glasses before the operation, this will most likely need changing or to be removed, your orthoptist will advise you what is required.

If you normally wear contact lenses **do not use these after the operation** until your orthoptist or ophthalmologist says it is ok to do so.

Returning to work/college/university

You can return as soon as you feel able, on average patients need one week off work and normal activities but this can vary between patients.

People who work in a dusty environment or undertake heavy manual work may be more susceptible to irritation of the operated eye(s) and need longer off.

Returning to driving

As you have had a general anaesthetic you cannot drive immediately after your eye operation.

You can start driving a few days after your operation as soon as you feel safe to do so.

However, if you have double vision after the operation you should not drive until you have seen the orthoptist and they have advised that it is safe to do so.

Things to avoid

No swimming for four weeks after surgery as your eye(s) can become irritated from the water.

It is best to avoid washing your hair the first day or two, after this we recommend using a mild baby shampoo and to avoid getting water or shampoo into your eyes.

We recommend that you avoid contact sports and strenuous exercise for two weeks after your operation.

If you normally wear eye make-up and/or false eyelashes we recommend not to do so for four weeks after the operation to avoid any potential eye infection or accidental injury and irritation from for example a mascara wand.

If you have pets at home, please ensure you wash your hands after touching your pet to avoid irritation of the eye(s) and infection.

Infection

The white of the eye(s) will be red after the operation and there may be some discharge. You can clean and bathe the eyelids and skin around the eye using clean tissues and cooled boiled water.

Do not rub your eye with a tissue or your fingers.

It is very rare to develop an infection after squint surgery, however if you notice any of the following, please contact us straight away:

- Yellow or green discharge from the eye(s)
- Swelling or increased redness of the eyelids
- Persistent eye pain that is not relieved by paracetamol
- A significant reduction in vision in one or both eyes

Follow-up

You will be seen by the orthoptist around 2-3 weeks after your operation to check your vision, eye position, eye movements and how the eye(s) is healing.

Your appointment is:

At:

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact the Orthoptic team on **01772 522417** (Monday to Friday between 8.30am to 4.40pm). If the Orthoptists are not available when you call, there is a 24-hour answerphone where you may leave a message.

Orthoptic Department:
Broughton Suite (near the main entrance),
Royal Preston Hospital,
Sharoe Green Lane,
Preston.
PR2 9HT

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.squintclinic.com

www.orthoptics.org.uk/patients-and-public/

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www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**.

Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.

This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

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