Advice following cataract extraction and lens implantation

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

This leaflet is for patients who have had cataract surgery and lens implantation. It offers advice on caring for your eye immediately after surgery.

Pain relief

It is common for your eye to feel scratchy as though there is something in it for a day or two but it is unusual for the eye to be painful after this operation. Paracetamol or your usual painkillers should usually provide adequate pain relief – follow the dosage instructions on the packet. If pain increases or is not controlled at home then you should attend Eye Casualty. Please see the opening hours at the end of this leaflet.

Caring for your eye

- You will be asked to remove the eye shield and/or pad the morning after the operation. If the lashes are sticky or gummed up, gently wipe your eyelids with gauze and cooled, boiled water, but it is important to avoid rubbing the eye itself.
- You should throw away the white pad, but keep the clear plastic shield. This must be worn at night for two weeks following the operation.
- Sunglasses or normal glasses should be worn during the day to protect the eye.

Eye drops

- You will be given eye drops containing a mixture of antibiotic and anti-inflammatory drugs. Please use these drops as advised on discharge.
- If you are allergic to preservative you will be given the antibiotic and steroid drops separately.
- If you are running out of the drops, please contact the unit where you had your surgery for a replacement; contact details are listed on this leaflet. Please do not stop using the eye drops until your eye doctor advises you to do so.

- If you use other eye drops for conditions such as dry eye or glaucoma, you must open a new bottle for the operated eye and avoid using it in the other eye to prevent infection. They can be used at the same time as your new drops

Washing

Please take care around the eye area when washing your hair and face for the first two weeks. You can lower the shower head to avoid water from splashing into your eyes. Eye makeup should be avoided for two weeks.

Resuming daily activities

Avoid vigorous exercise such as heavy gardening, sports (particularly swimming), carrying heavy loads etc, for the first two weeks. Gentle activity is encouraged and reading/ computer work/watching television is not harmful.

Driving

You should be able to drive after two or three days as long as the sight in the other eye is good and the operated eye is comfortable. You must be able to read (with glasses or contact lenses) a car number plate at 20 metres (approx 22 yards) and meet the minimum visual acuity and field of vision with the unaffected eye – your optician can advise and do a test. You can return to your optician after four to six weeks for an eye test www.gov.uk/driving-eyesight-rules.

Vision & Follow up visit

Your eyesight should improve in the operated eye after a day or two. We do not routinely see patients for a post-operative review following surgery. Instead, you will be asked to visit your local optician 5 – 6 weeks after surgery in order to be reviewed for new spectacles.

At times due to complexity of the procedure or pre-existing eye conditions, a follow up appointment within the eye clinic may be necessary. You will be advised of this on discharge.

Problems or questions

If the operated eye becomes painful, the vision deteriorates or you develop nausea or vomiting, go to Eye Casualty.

Contacting us

If you have a minor eye problem, please seek advice from your GP, optician or pharmacist. If urgent, please attend Eye Casualty or call 111.

Eye Casualty (Reading):	Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5pm; Sat & Sun & bank holidays 9am-12.30pm; Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.
Eye Casualty: Prince Charles Eye Unit (Windsor):	Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5pm; Sat 8.30am-12.30pm; Closed Sun & bank holidays.
Dorrell Ward (Reading):	0118 322 7172 (24 hours a day)
Eye Day Unit (Reading):	0118 322 7123 (Mon-Fri 7am to 6pm)
Eye Day Unit (PCEU Windsor)	01753 636496 Mon-Fri 7am to 6pm)

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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