

Instructions for Patients Following Vitreo-Retinal Surgery

You should immediately contact your doctor if:

- You experience severe pain
- Your vision deteriorates
- The redness of your eye increases
- You have discharge from your eye.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding any of the information provided below, please contact your surgeon's consulting rooms. Specifically, in relation to restrictions affecting activities of daily living (showing, washing hair) and strenuous physical activities (swimming lifting heavy weights, gardening).

Medications

Collect your prescribed medications from the pharmacy after discharge. Follow the instructions given to you by your doctor.

If you are to use drops four times daily: before breakfast, before lunch, before dinner and before bed.

After your surgery

- No strenuous activity or exercise until you have seen your doctor
- Paracetamol (Panadol, Panamax or Dymadon), or medication prescribed by doctor, should be taken if you have discomfort or pain in the eye
- Due to the possible effects of the anaesthetic, a responsible adult will be required to drive you home and for twenty-four (24) hours you should not drive a motor vehicle, use any moving machinery or sign legal documents
- It is not unusual for the eye to be very watery following the operation, this is the eye producing extra tears in an attempt to make the eye more comfortable. It is also normal for the eye to look very bloodshot and for the eyelids to be swollen.

About your surgery and after-care

During your operation, a bubble of gas, air or oil may have been injected into the eye to keep the retina flat after your surgery. This will be achieved when the bubble floats up and supports the retina in place from inside the eye.

Information about Gas / Oil

If a gas or air bubble has been used during your operation, the eye will absorb the bubble. The time taken for the gas to be absorbed will vary between 1 – 8 weeks. This will depend on which type of gas has been used.

During this time, you **must not fly** as the change of air pressure inside the plane will cause the bubble to expand rapidly causing a severe and blinding pressure rise in the eye.

If silicone oil has been used, this may need to be removed at a later date.

You can move about, but while doing so you need to maintain the correct position as ordered by your doctor.

Unless instructed by your doctor, never lie on your back or have your head tilted back for any longer than it takes to use the eye drops.

You may find the neck and shoulder muscle ache and become stiff due to the unusual position you are maintaining.

Gentle massage of the muscles or mild pain medication may help.

Try to gently exercise your arms and legs to help the blood circulation and to relieve the pressure on the skin.

If you are required to position face down, you may maintain the position by:

- Lying on the bed with pillows for support, or
- You may prefer to sit at a table, using pillows for support (this way you will not be so isolated from friends and family).

You should keep your elbows straight as much as possible and avoid pressure on the inside of the elbows to avoid pressure and possible damage to the ulnar nerve.

Instillation of eye drops

Please wash your hands well with soap and water before instilling your eye drops. To instill the eye drops:

- Look up and gently pull down the lower lid with your finger and rest your other fingers on the cheek bone
- Tilt your head back and look up
- Gently squeeze the bottle and instill one drop. Do not touch the eye with the bottle
- Remove your finger and gently close the eye for one minute
- Gently wipe away any excess drops with a clean tissue and then discard tissue.

If you have more than one drop due at the same time, wait 5 minutes before instilling the next drop. Recap the bottle and store in a cool dry place.