

Eyelid Surgery - What to expect

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What happens during the surgery

A 'peg' will be placed on your finger to measure the amount of oxygen in your blood and your pulse – this is known as pulse oximetry.

Anaesthetic eye drops will be instilled into your eyes. A local anaesthetic injection will be given into your eyelids. This will sting for about 20 to 30 seconds and take effect after 2 to 3 minutes. If necessary, during the operation further anaesthetic can be given.

Your face will be cleaned, and drapes will be placed around your face.

What to expect after the operation

It is normal following the surgery to experience post-operative discomfort, swelling of the eyelids and bruising. You may experience oozing from the incision site or irritation from the stitches (sutures).

Your eyelids may feel 'tight' for a few days.

Eyelid cleaning

Wash your hands first!

Use clean gauze and cooled boiled water. Soak the gauze swab and use it on the eyelids to remove debris.

Dab the eyelids, moving the gauze horizontally away from the nose across the eyelid and avoiding the eye.

N.B. the stitches (sutures) used are quite secure but still be gentle!

What to do to reduce pain and swelling

All patients experience some pain in their eyelid and face after surgery. Please take your usual painkillers. To reduce swelling, apply cold compresses to the eyelids.

Apply the compresses 5 to 10 minutes every 2 to 3 hours for the first 3 to 4 days after the surgery.

Most of the general discomfort due to surgery resolves after 3 to 4 days. Some areas, particularly the outer corners of the eyes (following lower eyelid surgery), will remain tender for 2 to 3 months.

Other general do's and don'ts

- Elevate your head when resting or sleeping to help reduce swelling.
- Be careful to avoid rubbing your eyelids as your wound may open up.
- Do not drive for 24 to 48 hours after surgery.
- Swimming should be avoided for 2 to 3 weeks or until the wounds have healed.
- No vigorous exercise for two weeks.
- Contact lenses should not be used for the first 7 to 10 days after surgery.
- Do not apply make-up until the sutures have been removed or absorbed.

Stitches (sutures)

Absorbable stitches (sutures) are typically used. These do not usually require removing as they absorb within 6 to 8 weeks. However, if the stitches (sutures) are still present at the first follow-up appointment, they can be removed in clinic.

Important

Infection is a risk with any surgery including eyelid surgery. Antibiotic tablets typically are not given after surgery, however, if you suspect you have developed an infection following surgery, please contact your GP or ourselves for advice. A course of oral antibiotics may be needed.

Contact Information:

Lincoln County Hospital

Office hours: 01522 307180 then select option 4

Out of hours: Contact the on-call Ophthalmologist via switchboard on 01522 512512

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