PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Caring for Your Prosthetic Eye

This information explains how to remove your prosthetic eye, clean it, and put it back into your eye socket. The steps in this resource can be done by you or your caregiver.

It's important to take care of your prosthetic eye and eye socket to keep them from getting irritated. Clean your prosthetic eye and eye socket whenever your eye is red, swollen, or dirty.

Visit your ocularist (prosthetic eye specialist) about every 6 months for a check-up. They will also polish your prosthetic eye for you. The polishing will remove any dirt or buildup that naturally forms over time on your prosthetic eye.

How to take out your prosthetic eye

Follow these steps to take out your prosthetic eye. You may find it helpful to do this in front of a mirror until you're comfortable doing it without one.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Gently pull your lower eyelid down using your index finger. This will help you see the bottom of your prosthetic eye.
3. Use your index finger to gently lift your prosthetic eye out of your eye socket.

How to take out your prosthetic eye with a suction cup

You can also remove your prosthetic eye using a suction cup. If you're using a suction cup, follow these steps:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Wash your suction cup with mild soap or baby shampoo and water.

3. Wet the tip of your suction cup with water. This will help it have better suction.
4. Squeeze the handle of the suction cup and place it on the middle of your prosthetic eye.
5. Release the squeeze to let the suction cup attach to your prosthetic eye.
6. Use your index finger to gently pull your lower eyelid down. Lift your prosthetic eye upward or outward to remove it.
7. Wash your suction cup with mild soap or baby shampoo and water.

Clean off any discharge

You may have some drainage or discharge coming from your eye socket once you remove your prosthetic eye. This is normal. You can clean your eye socket by wetting a clean washcloth with warm water. Use the washcloth to wipe from the inner corner of your eye socket to the outside of your eye. Do this until your eye socket is clean.

Cleaning your prosthetic eye

Please visit www.mskcc.org/pe/prosthetic-eye-video to watch this video.

Follow these steps to clean your prosthetic eye. Remember to clean it whenever your eye or eye socket is red, swollen, or dirty.

1. Rinse your prosthetic eye with water.
2. Wash it with mild soap or baby shampoo. **Do not use alcohol-based cleaning products. They can damage your prosthetic eye.**
3. Wash all sides of your prosthetic eye.
4. Rinse it with water. Make sure to rinse off all the soap.
5. Let it air dry. Do not use any cloth that can leave particles on your prosthetic eye.

How to put your prosthetic eye back in

Follow these steps to place your prosthetic eye in your eye socket:

1. Gently lift your upper eyelid with your fingers. Place the top of your prosthetic eye under your eyelid.
    - Most prosthetic eyes have a marking to let you know where the top and bottom are. If yours does not, look for a dent on your prosthetic eye. The dent is on the top of the eye and towards the nose. Use this to help guide your placement.
2. Slowly place the bottom of your prosthetic eye into your eye socket.
3. Pull your lower eyelid down and over your prosthetic eye.
4. Close your eyes to ensure your prosthetic eye is comfortable. Look in the mirror to make sure it's in the right position.

Placing your prosthetic eye with a suction cup

You can also place your prosthetic eye into your eye socket using a suction cup. If you're using a suction cup, follow these steps:

1. Wet the tip of your suction cup with water. This will help it have better suction.
2. Squeeze the handle of the suction cup and place it on the middle of your prosthetic eye.
3. Release the squeeze to let the suction cup attach to your prosthetic eye.
4. Gently lift your upper eyelid with your fingers. Place the top of your prosthetic eye under your eyelid.
5. Pull your lower eyelid down and over your eye.
6. Gently pull the suction cup off.

When to call your healthcare provider or ocularist

Call your healthcare provider or ocularist if you have any of the following:

- Your prosthetic eye is no longer fitting the way it was.
- Your prosthetic eye has a chip or crack in it.
- Your eye socket is swollen, red, irritated, or painful.
- You cannot get your prosthetic eye to fit back in your eye socket.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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