

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Caring for Your Prosthetic Eye

It's important to take care of your prosthetic eye and eye socket to keep them from getting irritated. You should clean your prosthesis and eye socket whenever your eye is irritated (such as red or swollen) or whenever your prosthetic eye is dirty.

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

Removing Your Prosthetic Eye

Follow these steps to remove your prosthetic eye:

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. You may find it helpful to do this in front of a mirror until you're more comfortable doing it.

Removing 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 prosthesis.
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 prosthesis upward or outward to remove it.
7. Wash your suction cup with mild soap or baby shampoo and water.

You may have some drainage or discharge coming from your eye socket once you remove your prosthesis. This is normal. You can clean your eye socket by wetting a clean wash cloth with warm water and using it to wipe from the inner corner to the outside of your eye until your eye socket is clean.

Cleaning Your Prosthetic Eye

Follow these steps to clean your prosthetic eye. Remember to

clean it whenever your eye socket is irritated (such as red or swollen) or whenever your prosthetic eye is dirty.

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

Placing Your Prosthetic Eye in Your Eye Socket

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 prosthesis under your eyelid.
 - Most prosthesis have a marking to let you know where the top and bottom are. If yours doesn't, look for a dent on your prosthesis. 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 prosthesis.
4. Close your eyes to ensure your prosthetic eye is comfortable. Look in the mirror to make sure it's positioned correctly.

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 prosthesis.
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 prosthesis under your eyelid.
5. Pull your lower eyelid down and over your prosthesis.
6. Gently pull the suction cup off your prosthesis.

When to Call Your Healthcare Provider or Ocularist

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

- Your prosthesis is no longer fitting the way it was.

- Your prosthesis has a chip or crack in it.
- Your eye socket is swollen, red, irritated, or painful and you can't get your prosthesis to fit back in your socket.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

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

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