What to Expect After Your Enucleation Surgery

This information explains how to care for your eye socket after your enucleation surgery. In this resource, the words “you” and “your” refer to you or your child.

Your surgery is scheduled for:

_______________________________

After Your Surgery

Caring for your eye socket

After your surgery, you will have a dressing covering your eye socket and your eyelid will be closed. Keep the dressing on for 1 to 4 days as directed by your ophthalmology team. Keep the dressing dry and shower only from the neck down.

After you have removed the dressing, clean your face as usual with water and a clean cloth. Your doctor will give you a prescription for tobramycin and dexamethasone (TobraDex®) ointment. Apply it 2 times a day between your eyelids until your follow-up appointment. If you run out before your appointment, check with your pharmacy if you have refills or call our office.
You can shower as usual after your dressing is removed, but don’t put your head underwater (in the bathtub, pool, or ocean) until 2 weeks after your surgery.

**Side effects**

For the first few weeks after your surgery, the area around your eye may be bruised and swollen. There may also be watery or pinkish drainage, a “scratchy” feeling, and mild discomfort in the area. This is normal and will go away within a few days.

Don’t rub, press, or bump your eye socket. It may take some time for you to adjust seeing out of only 1 eye.

**Plastic conformer**

During your surgery, your ophthalmologist (eye doctor) will put a soft, plastic or silicone conformer between your eyelids. It will help keep the shape of your eye.

The conformer may fall out in the first few weeks after your surgery. If you feel comfortable replacing the conformer, clean the conformer with soap and water and put it back between your eyelids, like a contact lens. If you don’t feel comfortable replacing it, bring the conformer with you to your next appointment and a member of your healthcare team will replace it for you.

You can choose to wear a patch until you receive your prosthesis (artificial eye) but it isn’t medically necessary. You can buy disposable eye patches at any pharmacy or may choose instead to
wear sunglasses.

Follow-up Appointment

You will need to schedule your follow-up appointment when you’re discharged from the hospital. Your healthcare team will tell you when you should schedule it. Call your doctor’s office at one of the numbers listed in the “Contact Information” section.

After your follow-up, your doctor will ask you to schedule an appointment with an ocularist. An ocularist is someone who makes and fits prosthetic eyes. Your ocularist will design your prosthesis to match your other eye. Your healthcare team can recommend an ocularist, but you will need to check with your insurance company to make sure that they are covered under your insurance plan.

Call Your Doctor or Nurse if You Have:

- Pain that is not relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- Intense headaches
- Nausea (feeling like you’re going to throw up)
- Vomiting (throwing up)
- Bleeding through the dressing
- Yellow or green drainage

If you have a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, call your
Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your ophthalmology team. You can reach them Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at the numbers listed below.

Adult ophthalmology office: 212-639-7266

Pediatric ophthalmology office: 212-639-7232

After 5:00 pm, during the weekend, and on holidays, call 212-639-2000 and ask for the ophthalmology doctor on call. Additionally, you can try the numbers listed below:

Doctor:________________________ Telephone: ______________________

Physician assistant:______________ Telephone: _______________________ 

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

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