



ALASKA FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY & ENT
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POST-OPERATIVE BLEPHAROPLASTY CARE

Eyelid surgery is not advisable if you suffer from retinal disease, previous retinal hemorrhage, narrow angle glaucoma, or if you have had recent ocular surgery. Please alert your surgeon if you suffer from any of these conditions.

BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Discontinue all **Aspirin** and **Non-steroidal Anti-Inflammatory (NSAIDs)** such as Motrin, Advil, and Aleve for 10 days prior to surgery. These medications may cause excess surgical bleeding and should be avoided. Large amounts of vitamin E and over the counter herbal supplements should likewise be discontinued. Tylenol (Acetaminophen) is the only non-prescription analgesic, which may be used before surgery. If in doubt, ask your surgeon about the medicines you may be taking. Also, if you are on any medications that affect bleeding (**Coumadin/Plavix**) please notify the office immediately.
2. Gather supplies in advance: Gauze pads (2x2 or 4x4), dark sunglasses, cotton swabs, cold packs and “artificial tears”.
3. Refrain from all nicotine products, including cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chew or “the patch”. Nicotine interferes with healthy circulation, can delay healing, and can result in scarring. It also places you at higher risk of complication when receiving anesthesia
4. You will be given prescriptions for after surgery (typically an antibiotic and pain medication).

AFTER SURGERY:

1. Blepharoplasty usually causes little if any post-operative pain. If you notice significant sharp pain or dull pain that persists, notify our office immediately.
2. For best results, cold compress may be used over your eyes for 20- 30 minutes six times per day. Ice compress should be continued (except at night) for the next 2-3 days. Consistent use of ice during the first 48-72 hours can shorten healing by several days. This will also promote comfort, reduce swelling, and bruising.
3. Sleep on your back and keep your head elevated (45 degrees) above the heart to minimize swelling.
4. Apply ointment provided to the incision twice daily. Use sparingly and place only a tiny amount on the incision lines.
5. In general, your eyelids will hurt very little unless you disturb them; try to minimize reading, squinting, or rubbing your eyes.
6. Dark sunglasses should be used in any bright light exposure. This can help prevent the discomfort and swelling associated with squinting.
7. Bruising and swelling of the eyelids may last 1-2 weeks. Any apparent redness of the whites of the eyeball is only a form of bruising and will subside during the early healing process.
8. Many patients will experience an increase in mucous production along the eyelashes. If this should occur, gently soak the lashes for 10-15 minutes with wet gauze then use moist cotton swabs to gently remove crusts.
9. Do not engage in vigorous exercise or sports for at least three weeks or as approved by your surgeon.
10. It is normal to feel slight itching and tightness of the eyelids during the early healing period.
11. Healing is a gradual process, scars maybe slightly pink for 6 months or more. Tiny whiteheads (milia) may appear after sutures are removed, these can easily be removed by the surgeon.
12. Sutures will be removed from the eyelids 5 to 7 days after surgery.
13. Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
14. Avoid all eye make-up for the first 10-14 days following surgery or until approved by surgeon.

To achieve the best cosmetic results from upper eyelid surgery, the maximum amount of excess skin will be removed. Often this will result in temporary shrinkage of the upper eyelid, so the eyes do not close completely during sleep. This condition will resolve spontaneously. If it is associated with pain or burning, please notify your surgeon immediately.

Vision:

Contact lenses cannot be worn for the first 2 weeks after a blepharoplasty. Occasionally a patient will experience mild changes in visual acuity (often for the better) but these will eventually resolve. For this reason, it is a good idea to wait 2-3 months after eyelid surgery before having your eyeglass prescription changed. Similarly, some patients may experience temporary dryness after blepharoplasty that can be treated with over the counter "artificial tears" as needed. Significant visual loss is highly unusual. If you experience loss of vision or severe pain after surgery, notify your surgeon immediately.

Activity:

Rest quietly in bed with your head elevated or sit in a reclining chair for the first 48-72 hours after surgery. Unnecessary activity will encourage swelling, bruising, and discomfort, so remain at rest except for visits to the bathroom. Avoid exercise and exertion for the first 2 weeks. *Most importantly*, wound complications such as bleeding are more likely to happen with vigorous activity engaged to early. You are free to wash your face two days after surgery. Avoid contamination of the eyes with soap, shampoo, etc.

Medications:

You should not need prescriptions for pain medications or oral antibiotics. Tylenol should be used for discomfort. Remember that the pain will worsen with activity, movement, or vomiting, so control pain with bed rest and Tylenol.

WHAT TO EXPECT FOLLOWING BLEPHAROPLASTY

Certain physical changes are expected following blepharoplasty. Some individuals experience all the following conditions and others only some. The degree to which each person is affected is individual and unpredictable.

- SWELLING/BRUISING - The skin and tissues around the eye are quite delicate and surgery naturally causes some swelling and bruising of the lids and surrounding area. The conjunctiva, or clear membrane covering the eyeball itself, may swell and give the eye a boggy appearance and may also cause some minor blurring of vision.
- ITCHING/BURNING/TIGHTNESS - These sensations of the eye, too, are normal following surgery and may last for several months but usually are most noticeable in the first week after surgery.
- PAIN - Some discomfort due to surgery and swelling are normal, but severe pain is unusual and should be reported to our office immediately.
- VISUAL CHANGES - Some mild visual blurring may occur due to swelling of the conjunctiva or to the antibiotic ointment in the eye and may clear temporarily with blinking. Any severe blurring, blind spots or complete loss of vision is rare and should be reported to our office immediately.
- BLEEDING - A little bloody oozing along the suture lines is normal and may be gently blotted with a clean Q-tip. Small blood clots (hematomas) may also occur in the conjunctiva and appear as red blotches on the white of the eye. These resolve in 7-10 days. Excessive bleeding is unusual and should be reported. You may wash the eye with saline eye solution to clear any clots.
- SCARS - The scars from blepharoplasty are usually minimal after complete healing has occurred. In the first 7-10 days after suture removal the incision may be barely visible. The scar then enters a "red phase" and may appear thicker. After several weeks to months the scars begin to fade and lighten in color.
- INFECTION - Infections following blepharoplasty are uncommon. Should infection occur, additional treatment including antibiotics may be necessary. Localized abscesses (whiteheads) do occur along the suture lines and usually resolve with the application of warm compresses. Any severe redness, swelling or pus in the eye should be reported to our office.

If you have questions or concerns following your surgery please call our office at **907-671-6017** (after hours, ask for ENT doctor on call) or call **911** for emergency.