

Care of the eyes after Cataract surgery in children

All surgery is under general anaesthetic. The operation takes about one hour. It is usual to go home the same day, about 4 hours after waking up. In nearly all cases the cataract, which is the lens of the eye, is removed and replaced with a plastic lens implant.

When you return from the operating theatre there will be a pad and plastic shield over the operated eye. These protect the eye and keep it closed. It is important that the pad is not removed by anyone apart from the operating surgeon, usually 3-4 hours after surgery.

Please keep the plastic shield on at night for the first week after surgery.

The eye will usually be comfortable although there may feel like there is something in it. It may be a little red. There may be some slight watering. It is fine to take Calpol (Paracetamol) for the pain or discomfort.

Eye drops: You will be given steroid and antibiotic drops to put in the eye, usually for every hour during the daytime for the first 2 days after surgery. A third drop to dilate the pupil (make it bigger) is sometimes also given. All these drops are to make the eye more comfortable and heal faster. Drops will continue for at least a month after surgery, and you will be given instructions on how to reduce the amount.

The eyelids can be cleaned of excess mucous or ointment with cool (boiled) water on a clean piece of cotton wool.

Are there any stitches in the eye?

There usually are small stitches on the surface of the eye, but these will dissolve and fall out after 3-6 weeks.

When can you swim?

No swimming until 4 weeks after surgery. Please check first with Mr Morrison.

Can I have a bath or shower? What about hair washing?

Yes, but avoid saturating the eyes and face. A splash of water is fine. Try and avoid getting shampoo in the eyes, as you would normally do.

When can I go back to school?

You can expect your child to be off school for 5 days after surgery, although you may be able to return a day or two earlier than this.

When do I have to come back to the eye clinic?

The eye is always checked the day after surgery, then at one week, and approximately three weeks. Glasses may need to be prescribed and worn weeks after surgery.

Contact my secretary or personal assistant if there is severe pain and the eyelid cannot be opened because of excessive lid swelling. This can be a sign of infection or reaction to the antibiotic/steroid drops given.