

Care of the eyes after ptosis surgery in children

All ptosis 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.

When you return from the operating theatre there will be a pad over the operated eye. The pad reduces swelling and keeps the eye closed. It is important that the pad is not removed by anyone apart from the operating surgeon, usually on the day of surgery or the morning after.

The eyelid will feel a little sore and will be red with some moderate lid swelling. There will be sutures (stitches) just above the eyelashes on the upper lid. These will dissolve or fall out during the two months after surgery. There may be some slight watering. It is fine to take Calpol (Paracetamol) for the pain or discomfort.

Eye drops: You will be given artificial tears plus antibiotic drops/ointment to put in the eye for 3-4 times a day for at least two weeks. These keep the surface of the eye moist. Do not panic if you miss the occasional drop.

Ice packs: These help to reduce lid swelling, pain, and speeds up healing. The ice pack can be made by wrapping ice or a packet of frozen food such as peas in a plastic bag, flannel or towel. Apply the ice pack to the closed eyelid for 5-10 minutes every hour during the daytime for the first two days after surgery, immediately after the eye pad has been removed.

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

When can you swim?

No swimming until after the first clinic visit at 1-2 weeks. Please check first with Mr Morrison. If you must swim then watertight goggles can be worn.

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 can I wear my glasses again after squint surgery?

Straight away, as soon as the eyepad has been removed.

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

The eye is usually checked the day of surgery, then after one week, then at 2-3 months.

What problems can occur after ptosis surgery?

The eyelid can be too high or too low in about 1 in 10 cases. Remember that the lid height will change the first week after surgery. An eyelid that is too high may require more artificial tears to protect the surface and keep the eye moist. The eyelid contour (profile) may be slightly different or not perfectly symmetrical with the other side. In 80-90% of children it is good or satisfactory. Infection of the eyelid with the need to have oral/intravenous antibiotics with re-admission to hospital is very unusual.

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.