

Care for Wound(s) Near the Eye or Eyelid

You have had surgery near your eye or eyelid. Special care and good cleaning of the wound and eye helps your wound to heal and prevents problems such as infection. This handout tells you how to care for your wound once you are home. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the phone number at the end of this handout.

Supplies

- Clean cotton swabs (Q-tips®)
- 1 bottle of sterile saline for contact lens wearers (in a squirt type bottle)
- 1 tube Vaseline® (white petroleum)
- Band-Aids®
- Telfa® pads and tape
- Sterile eye ointment

If your eye is covered with an eye patch, the nurse will let you know how to care for your eye.

Wound Care

Start your wound care on _____. Keep the dressing clean and dry until then. Clean your wound ___times a day until it is healed.

How to Care for the Wound

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Take off the old dressing. If it sticks, wet the dressing with water from the sink or in the shower.
3. Shower with the bandage off. Allow a gentle spray of water to cleanse the eye/wound for about 20 seconds. If you cannot shower, use sterile normal saline for soft contact lens wearers and squirt saline gently over wound, rinsing it daily.

Note: You may have Gelfoam® on your wound to stop the bleeding. The Gelfoam® will slowly come off as the wound is cleaned. Do not force it off. If some remains, it will fall off over time.

4. Wash hands again with soap and water before touching your bandage supplies.
5. Apply Vaseline® (white petroleum) in a **thin** layer using a clean Q-tip®.
6. Cover with a Band-Aid® or Telfa® pad to soak up any drainage and protect the wound. As the drainage lessens, the wound may be left open to air. Be careful when you put the Telfa® dressing on the wound. Do not let the Telfa® dressing rub your eye.
7. Use sterile eye lubricating ointment if you cannot close your eyelid all the way.

Pain Control

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, you may take both Tylenol® or ibuprofen to help control your pain. We suggest:

- Tylenol® 1000mg every 6-8 hours
- Ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours

You may take them together every 6-8 hours, or alternate taking one type alone and then the other 3-4 hours later. Repeat this pattern every 3-4 hours.

If prescribed a narcotic pain medicine, please do not drink or drive while taking this medicine. Limit use of over the counter Tylenol® (acetaminophen) if you are given a prescription that contains acetaminophen. It

is best to take narcotics with food to prevent nausea/vomiting. Narcotics may also cause constipation. You may use over the counter stool softeners as needed.

If you have a sudden increase in pain that is not relieved by pain medicines and ice compress, please call the clinic where you were seen. You may have bleeding under your skin and need treatment.

Call us if you have any sharp pain or gritty feeling on your eyeball (feels as if something is in your eye), or a lot of tearing or redness of the eye.

Activities

- **Do not do heavy activity for the first 2 days or as told by your doctor.**
- **Do not lift more than 15 pounds until your doctor says it is ok.**
- Do not drive if your eye is swollen, covered, or you have any problems with your vision.
- No swimming or use of hot tubs until your wound is healed.
- Avoid bending over, keep your head above the level of your waist.

Swelling and Bruising

This is fairly common but goes away in 2 to 3 weeks.

- Sleep with your head raised on 2 pillows to reduce swelling.
- Avoid bending with your head below heart level.

Swelling around the eyes and neck is normal. Swelling will be worse in the morning and improve during the day. Expect that swelling may persist for 3 days or longer.

If you were told to apply ice to reduce swelling:

- **Do not apply ice right on the skin.**
- Ice should be placed in a plastic bag then wrapped in a towel and applied to the bandaged wound.
- Ice should be kept on for only 15 minutes at a time.

Bleeding

Do not use alcohol, aspirin, or medicines that contain aspirin while your wound is healing unless your doctor tells you to. They may increase your risk of bleeding.

If you have bleeding:

1. Press firmly over the site for 10 minutes (timed by the clock). If the bleeding has not stopped, use pressure for 10 more minutes (timed by the clock).
2. If the bleeding still has not stopped, call the clinic where you were seen or go to your local emergency room. **Have someone else drive you.**
3. You can reinforce the soiled bandage, but do not remove it. You could disturb the clot.
4. Keep your head elevated.
5. Use ice or cool compresses to slow the bleeding.

Infection

Infection is not common when the wound is well cared for. If you notice any of these symptoms, please call the clinic:

- Fever greater than 101° F for two readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Increased pain or swelling of the wound.
- Pus or smelly wound drainage.
- Increased redness.
- Warmth around the site.

Scarring

Scarring is normal. Time improves most scars. You may use cover-up makeup after the wound has healed. You should use sunscreen on scars after healing. Some people may have very thick scars, or keloids, which may need extra medical care. Call the clinic if this occurs and we will schedule you a follow up visit.

Phone Numbers

If you have any questions or concerns, call the Dermatology/Mohs Clinic where you were seen **weekdays between 8:00 am-4:30 pm**. After clinic hours, holidays & weekends, the clinic number will be answered by the paging operator. Ask for the Dermatology or Mohs Surgery doctor on call. Leave your name and phone number with area code. The doctor will call you back.

UW East Mohs Clinic

5249 E. Terrace Drive/Madison, WI 53718
(608) 265-1288, press option 2

UW West Mohs Clinic

451 Junction Rd./Madison, WI 53717
(608) 263-6226

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 12/2018 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4901.