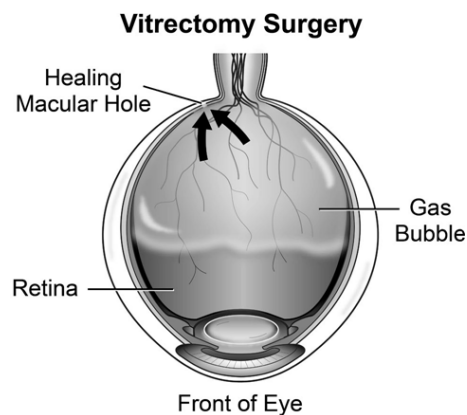


## Post-Operative Positioning After Vitrectomy Surgery

You just had vitrectomy surgery. Your surgeon placed a gas bubble or silicone oil in your eye to help close a macular hole or seal a retinal tear. The bubble must press on the hole or tear so it can seal. The bubble floats up toward the ceiling, so how you position your head helps guide it to the right spot. Use this handout to learn how to place your head after surgery.



### Placement

Your surgeon will tell you how to place your head.

- For a **macular hole**, point your nose toward the floor.
- For a **retinal detachment**, you may lie on your side or tilt your head.

Some people feel better sitting in a chair with their head on a pillow on a desk or table. You can also sit with your nose toward the floor without a device, but this may strain your neck. Short walks with your nose toward the floor are safe.

### Schedule

Your surgeon will tell you how long you need to stay in position. Many people follow these instructions for 1 week.

Stay in this position for 50 minutes each hour. Take a 10-minute break each hour to stretch your neck, use the bathroom, shower, or eat.

### Post-Op Positioning Chairs



Most patients use a post-op positioning chair or a travel pillow after surgery. A post-op positioning chair can help you stay in the right place and feel more at ease. This is very helpful if you must stay face down.

The device has a donut pillow for use in bed. This can feel hard and not very comfortable. Lying on your side and turning your nose toward the mattress also works well.

### Eye Drops

You will need to look up at the ceiling to put in your eye drops. This short break will not harm your eye.

### Activity Restrictions

You may read a book or use a computer if you keep them below your head.

You can watch TV with a mirror below you that points toward the screen. This is safe and helps pass the time. The positioning chair also has a mirror for this.

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 © 2/2026 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing HF#7512