

Discharge advice following eye surgery

Information and advice for patients

Ophthalmic Unit

Today you have had a

..... surgery under local anaesthetic / general anaesthetic / sedation.

This leaflet will explain how to care for yourself after your surgery.

Pain and swelling

You may experience some mild pain and swelling around your eye for a short time after the operation. Taking painkillers such as paracetamol can help to relieve this; follow the dosage instructions on the packet.

The day following surgery

- Remove your eye dressing the morning after your surgery
- Throw the inner dressing away. Keep the clear hard eye shield which you should wear at nights only for two to four weeks.

Bathing and showering

Do not splash water into your eye until your doctor tells you it is ok.

You can have a bath or a shower provided that you don't get water into your eye.

Do not let any soap get into your eye. You can wash your hair if you tilt your head back and cover your face with a clean, dry towel.

Cleaning your eye lids

If your eye lid needs to be cleaned:

1. Boil some water and allow it to cool.
2. Dip a few clean tissues into the water and squeeze out the excess moisture

3. Wipe the eyelids gently from the inner corner (closest to your nose) outwards.
4. Use a fresh tissue for each wipe

Driving

Do not drive until you have had a follow-up appointment with your doctor and they have said you are fit to return to driving.

Exercising

Avoid strenuous exercise and lifting heavy objects for the first 2 weeks after your operation.

Avoid swimming for 6 weeks after your operation.

Reading and watching TV

You can watch TV and read as normal if you are able.

Medication

You have been given eye drops to use, you should continue to use these until your follow-up appointment. If you need to get more eye drops, please see your GP. Please make sure to wash your hands before using the drops, to reduce your risk of getting an infection in your eye.

Special instructions

If you have had a general anaesthetic or sedation

During the 24 hours following your anaesthetic or sedation, it is important to obey the following instructions as anaesthetic medications may remain in the body and gradually wear off over this period.

- You should have someone to take you home from the hospital and stay with you overnight
- Do not drive a car or any other vehicle, including bicycles
- Do not cook or use any machinery
- Avoid alcohol
- Do not lock the bathroom or toilet door or make yourself inaccessible to the person looking after you
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat a light diet, avoiding heavy greasy foods
- Do not make any important decisions, even if you think you think you feel ok

- Do not be in charge of children or other people in your care
- Do not post anything on social media

Follow-up appointment

You will have a follow-up appointment with your doctor in the outpatient clinic after you have been discharged from hospital. This will be sent to you by post. If you have not received an appointment letter within one to two weeks, please call the department on 0121 507 6866 or 0121 507 4334 between the hours of 8am to 1pm and 2pm to 3pm Monday to Friday.

Symptoms to report

If you experience any of the following symptoms after you have been discharged from hospital, please contact the Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre A&E:

- Your vision becomes more blurred
- Your eye becomes more painful
- Your eye becomes more red

Contact details

Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre

Ophthalmic Unit is 0121 507 4440 opt 4

For follow up appointment please call on 0121 507 6866/4334, between the hours of 8am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm Monday to Friday

Eye A&E: 0121 507 4440 Option 1 from 8:30am to 7pm Monday to Friday, Saturday 9am to 7pm, Sunday and Bank Holidays 9am to 6pm

After these hours, please contact Midland Metropolitan University Hospital 0121 507 3646 or 0121 507 3969

Comments and suggestions

We hope that you have been satisfied with your care and treatment during your stay. If you feel that there is a particular area in which we could improve our service, please write to:

Directorate Manager

Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre
City Hospital
Dudley Road
Birmingham
B18 7QH

Further information

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our website www.swbh.nhs.uk, or follow us on X @SWBHnhs and Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

National Health Service (2025). Cataract Surgery. [online] Available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cataract-surgery/> (Accessed 30 July 2025)

Royal College of Ophthalmologists (2019). Vision standards for driving. [online]. Available at https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Vision-Standards-For-Driving_2019.pdf

(Accessed 30 July 2025).

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