

## **Instructions for Blepharoplasty**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The following instructions are based on experience with many blepharoplasty operations. They will answer practically every question that may arise regarding the "do's and don'ts" after surgery. You and your family should read them several times so that you become familiar with them. Attempt to follow them faithfully. Those who do generally have the smoothest postoperative course. This, of course, favors proper healing.

### **SWELLING AND DISCOLORATION**

As you were told before surgery, a varying amount of temporary swelling and discoloration follows every one of these operations, so try not to become anxious or depressed about it, it will pass.

### **AFTER SURGERY**

1. Continue to take the antibiotic as directed.
2. Sleep with your head elevated 30-40 degrees for one week; use an additional pillow or two under your head.
3. Apply ice compresses made of gauze sponges (not an ice pack) to your eyes as often as possible during the first two days after surgery.
4. Avoid bending over or lifting heavy things for one week. Besides aggravating swelling, this may raise the blood pressure and start hemorrhage.
5. Avoid straining at stool which also raises the blood pressure. If you feel you need a laxative get Correctol from your pharmacist (no prescription necessary).
6. Avoid hitting or bumping your face and eyes. It is wise not to pick up small children, and you should sleep alone for one week after your operation.
7. Avoid any tanning of the face during the first 30 days following your operation.
8. Don't tweeze your eyebrows for two weeks.
9. You may take a shower or bath the day after surgery, but avoid getting the eyes wet. The face may be gently cleansed.

### **HEMORRHAGE**

If hemorrhage occurs go to bed, elevate the head, apply cold compresses over the eyes, and have someone report it to us by telephone. You will most likely be told to come to the office.

### **TEMPERATURE**

Generally, the body temperature does not rise much above 100 degrees following surgery. This rise is due to dehydration caused by insufficient intake of fluids. People often think they have an increased temperature because they feel warm, when in reality, they do not. To be sure, measure your temperature with a thermometer. Please report any temperature over 100 degrees.

## **RESUMING NORMAL ACTIVITIES**

1. Do not apply hair coloring until two weeks after your procedure.
2. You may begin wearing eyeglasses or sunglasses the day following surgery. Contact lenses can be worn one week after upper eyelid surgery and two weeks after lower eyelid surgery.
3. Don't swim, dive, water ski, or participate in strenuous athletic activity for at least one month after surgery. Discuss your specific activities with your doctor.
4. Eye shadow and false eyelashes should not be applied until 10 days after surgery.
5. You can camouflage the discoloration around the eyes with make-up before you come to the office to get your sutures removed. Bring it near the line of incision, but do not apply over the incisions themselves until several days after the sutures have been removed. The following application technique seems best: First apply a layer over the entire discolored area; then apply more with a patting motion. Finally, blend the edges with surrounding skin.
6. You should not plan to return to work for four to five days after your surgery. Some people need one week. Even then, it might be wiser to wear sunglasses with large frames unless you don't mind becoming the center of attention. You'll have to play this by ear. Few people are very conspicuous after two weeks.

## **SOME POTENTIALLY UPSETTING BUT RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT THINGS THAT MIGHT OCCUR DURING THE HEALING PERIOD:**

1. Swelling may persist somewhat longer than usual. However, we have never yet encountered a case where it didn't ultimately subside. The same is true of discoloration.
2. Swelling and discoloration become more pronounced after some patients leave the surgery center. This is why you should follow the instructions given above to minimize swelling and not take any medications containing aspirin. Furthermore, if you have nasal allergy or "sinus trouble" you should take antihistamines to decongest your nose as this may be a contributing factor.
3. Rarely, the whites of both eyes may become partially discolored. This is painless, will not harm vision, and eventually absorbs.
4. Occasionally, the swelling will cause the lower lid to separate from the eyeball proper. This condition will be reversed as the swelling subsides. It can be prolonged if face powder granules, etc. become deposited in the area when cosmetics are applied.
5. During the first several days following surgery, the scars will be imperceptible. Then they go through a period of slight swelling and reddening. As this subsides, they again become virtually imperceptible. This is the way normal scars mature. Thus, any unevenness of the edges of the incision or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary and will subside with the passage of time. Cosmetics or cortisone creams may be used to minimize the problem while progressive evolution is occurring.

6. Occasionally small cysts which resemble whiteheads will appear beside the upper lid incisions. Like whiteheads, they will disappear after their contents are expressed in the office. The cysts occur less frequently in the lower lids.
7. Patients often experience some blurring of vision for two to three days postoperatively. This is generally due to swelling and/or ointments that have been used during the operation and will clear spontaneously.
8. Because the eyelid skin is so thin, it is very prone to swelling. Also, it takes at least nine months after surgery to completely heal. Therefore, be reassured that your eye's appearance will continue to improve and your eyes will feel more natural for up to one year after your surgery.