

Q&A

After your cataract surgery at St Stephen's Hospital

What do I do the night of my cataract operation?

You should leave the eye-pad on your eye overnight. If it becomes very irritating, you can remove the pad but it is important not to sleep on that side of your face.

You should not have any pain other than mild discomfort, for which you can take Paracetamol. If the pain is not controlled by this, please call the clinic on Phone 4121 0850.

When do I take the eye-pad off?

You can take off your eye-pad the day after your surgery.

When do I start putting in my eye-drops?

You can start putting in your eyedrops in 4 times a day once you have taken off your eye-pad, the day after your surgery.

Usually you will be given:

Flarex drops 4 times a day

Tobrex drops 4 times a day

Voltaren Ophtha drops 4 times a day

Don't forget to shake the bottle gently before using it.

How long do I take the drops for?

Keep taking these all 4 times a day until your 2nd post-operative visit 2 weeks after your operation (then see below).

Is it normal for the Voltaren Drops to sting?

Unfortunately yes - but it is important to reduce post-operative inflammation.

Do I need to stop any of my existing medications after the operation?

Unless you specifically instructed to do so, you should not stop any of your usual medications. You do not have to stop and alter your usual eye-drops.

How long should I wait between putting the drops in?

It is usually OK to wait 1 to 2 minutes between different types of drops.

What can I do after my operation?

You can do normal "light" activities such as walking around, shopping, watching television and reading. It is alright to rinse your face under the shower but you should keep your eye closed.

What should I not do after the operation?

For at least 2 weeks, you should not do anything too vigorous, you should not do any heavy lifting, you should avoid bending your head down low, and you should not rub your eyes. You should not swim in a swimming pool for several weeks. Please ask the staff if you have any questions regarding what you should and should not do.

If you work, you should aim to have at least one week off work, and more if you have a physically demanding job.

What should my vision be like after the operation?

Do not be alarmed if your vision is still blurred for the first few days after the operation. It usually takes a day or two for the effects of the operation itself (such as the dilating drops and the anaesthesia) to wear off and these will interfere with your vision.

Remember your old glasses will probably now be wrong.

I cannot read properly, is this normal?

It is normal not to be able to read without glasses after a cataract operation. It is perfectly safe to put on your old glasses in order to read or alternatively use a pair of hobby or reading glasses after the operation - this will not damage your eye in any way.

When can I drive again?

You should not drive until you have been told it is safe to do so by the surgeon. Usually this is within a few days of surgery.

What should my eye feel like?

Most patients will feel nothing after their operation.

A number of patients will feel some grittiness in their eye for several weeks after their operation.

Anything more than mild discomfort should be reported immediately.

Occasionally there may be some double vision for the first day after the surgery.

My eye is very red, should I be worried about this?

The eye can be red for a number of reasons. Most often it is due to the anaesthetic injection which causes some local bleeding and redness. However if there is associated PAIN or DECREASED VISION or ANY CONCERN AT ALL, you must call the surgery on 4121 0850. Redness is also concerning if the whole eye is red.

What other things should I be worried about?

Symptoms which warrant immediate phone assistance are:

1. **PAIN**
2. **DECREASED VISION**
3. **REDNESS** other than that associated with the anaesthetic.
4. **STICKINESS/DISCHARGE**

You should call if you have any concerns.

When do I have to visit the doctor after my operation?

We will organise a visit usually 1 to 2 days after the operation.

If you live in Maryborough and you do not wish to come back to Hervey Bay so soon after your surgery, we may organise for you to be reviewed by the optometrists at **Haman Optical, 147 Adelaide Street, Maryborough, QLD, 4650, 07 4123 4477**. If they are concerned in any way, they will contact your surgeon immediately.

Are there any other visits?

Yes, you will usually have to see your surgeon again after 2 weeks after your operation to make sure everything is settling down as it should.

You will also be asked to see your surgeon about three months after your operation, once you have got a new pair of glasses.

How do my drops change after the 2-week visit?

At the two week visit, you will usually be asked to change your eye-drops to:

Flarex drops 2 times a day

Voltaren Ophtha drops 2 times a day

STOP the Tobrex drops

Keep taking these drops for another week or until they run out, whichever comes first.

When can I get a new glasses?

Your old glasses will probably be wrong after the operation.

Hopefully you will have quite clear vision for distance vision but this may well still need some fine-tuning with a proper pair of glasses.

Also, reading will be difficult without the reading glasses.

You should arrange to see your optometrist about 4 to 6 weeks after your cataract operation to get a new pair of glasses.

In the meantime, it is perfectly safe to choose what is most comfortable for you in terms of either wearing your old glasses, not wearing any glasses at all, or using some hobby/reading glasses for reading.
