



Patient & Family Guide  
2023

# Eyelid Surgery

Aussi disponible en français :  
*Opération de la paupière* (FF85-2101)



[www.nshealth.ca](http://www.nshealth.ca)

# **Eyelid Surgery**

This pamphlet will help you learn how to care for yourself safely after surgery.

## **Why do I need eyelid surgery?**

- You may need eyelid surgery if:
  - › Your eyelid is in an abnormal position
  - › You have a lesion (lump, sore, or area of skin that is not normal)
  - › You have a malignancy (cancerous tumour) on your eyelid
- Eyelids can change position for many reasons, like:
  - › Age
  - › An injury on or around your eyelid
  - › Lesions on or around your eyelids
  - › Health conditions that can affect your eyes (like thyroid eye disease)

- Before you make any decisions about surgery, you should always talk with your surgeon about:
  - › the risks and benefits of having the procedure.
  - › other treatment options you may have.
- The type of surgery you need will depend on what kind of eyelid problem you have. Your surgeon will talk about this with you.

## **Before surgery**

- **Please call your eye surgeon's office before surgery if you are taking:**
  - › **Blood thinners** (like ASA [Aspirin®], ibuprofen [Advil®], or warfarin)
  - › Vitamins and/or herbal supplements (like multivitamins, green tea, garlic, Chinese herb, vitamin E, or ginkgo)
  - › Blood pressure medication

Some of these medications may thin your blood and increase your risk of bleeding during and after surgery.

- If needed, we will make an appointment for you at the Anticoagulation Clinic.

## **During surgery**

- You will have an anesthetic (medication to lower or prevent pain) before your surgery.
- You may have:
  - › **local anesthetic** (an area of your body will be frozen). You will usually have sedation (medication to help you relax and fall asleep) with a local anesthetic.

or

- › **general anesthetic** (medication to put you to sleep).
- Most eyelid surgery is done with local anesthetic.
- If you have a local anesthetic with eyelid surgery, you will be awake during your surgery and your eyelid will be frozen. You will not have any feeling in your eyelid during surgery.
- Your surgeon will tell you if you need a general anesthetic.
- The surgery will take about 1 hour.

## After surgery

- Your surgeon may give you instructions for your recovery.
- It is common to have some bloody drainage from the incision (cut) for up to 48 hours (2 days) after surgery.
- You may also have bruising and/or swelling around your eye after surgery. This is normal.
- You will have an incision (cut) and stitches around your eye. You will get a prescription for eye ointment to put on the incision.
- The stitches will dissolve (go away) on their own. They do not need to be removed.
- **You must have a responsible adult take you home (in a car, taxi, or bus). Do not go home by yourself.**
- You will need someone to help you at home for a few days after your surgery.
- Your eyelids will be droopy, puffy, and swollen for a few days after your surgery. You will not be able to see very well.

## **For the first week after your surgery:**

- › **Do not** swim.
- › **Do not** lift more than **10 pounds**.
- › **Do not** do strenuous (very hard) activity (like sports, yardwork, or housework).

## **Dressing**

Depending on the amount of bleeding during surgery, you may need a dressing over your eye or your eyelid.

## **Cold compress**

Place cold compresses over the bridge of your nose for the first **48 to 72 hours (2 to 3 days)** after surgery.

### **To make and use the cold compresses:**

1. Fill a large bowl with ice cubes and water.
2. Place clean facecloths in the bowl with the ice and water.
3. Place a cold facecloth from the bowl over your nose for **20 minutes**. After 20 minutes, switch to a new cold facecloth from the bowl.
4. Repeat this every 20 minutes **for every hour that you are awake**.

## Pain

- You may have some pain when the freezing wears off. This is normal.
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol® or Tylenol® Extra Strength) 4 to 6 times a day for pain.
- If you feel nauseous (sick to your stomach), you can take dimenhydrinate (Gravol™). Read and follow the instructions on the label.

## Follow-up appointment

We will make a follow-up appointment with your surgeon for you. The appointment is usually one to 2 weeks after your surgery.

### **Call your eye surgeon right away if:**

- › your vision gets worse.
- › you have a sudden increase in pain, redness, or swelling after **36 hours (one and a half days)**.
- › you have unusual drainage (fluid) from the incision.

**Phone number for my eye surgeon:**

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## **If you cannot contact your eye surgeon:**

**Call 902-473-2222 and ask the operator to page the ophthalmology resident on call or go to the nearest Emergency Department.**

### **Looking for more health information?**

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

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*Prepared by: Eye Care Centre*

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If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.