

Surgical Treatment for Retinoblastoma

What is Retinoblastoma?

Retinoblastoma is a malignant tumor (a fast-growing tumor that may invade nearby tissue) of the eye. It starts in the retina (the light-sensitive lining of the eye) and may be found in one or both eyes. The affected eye may have loss of vision and there may be some whiteness in the pupil (the black circle in the center of the eye).

How will my child's retinoblastoma be treated?

Many factors, such as the stage of the tumor and how likely it is that vision can be saved, affect your child's treatment options for retinoblastoma.

Enucleation, or removal the affected eye, is recommended when there is no other way to remove the cancer completely from the eye. If your child's tumor is large or if other treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation have not worked, then enucleation is the best option for stopping the spread of cancer.

What can I expect after the surgery?

Your child will stay in the hospital for 2 days after surgery. When they come out of surgery, your child will have a pressure patch placed over the eye. This patch will help reduce the swelling of the eye socket.

Before leaving the hospital the doctor will check the wound and remove the bandages. After the bandages are removed your child's eyelids may be swollen and black and blue.

The inside of the eye socket will look very "pink." The pink you will see is the tissue of your child's eye socket, which is like the lining of your mouth. The clear conformer will cover the pink tissue, which covers the implant.

Your child's doctor may send you home with eye drops or ointment to promote healing and prevent infection. Use this medicine only if recommend by your health care provider.

Will my child have pain?

After the surgery, some pain and discomfort is normal. No matter the level of your child's pain, we recognize they are hurting and will respond right away. You know your child best. We encourage you to take an active part in your child's recovery by talking with your care team about how your child shows pain and what comforts them. In addition to medicine given to your child while in the hospital, encourage age-appropriate coping tools to treat pain and provide support.

To Learn More

- Ophthalmology
206-987-3567
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.

What if the conformer comes out?



Clear conformer

The conformer, which covers the implant, may come out of your child's eye socket. Do not worry if this happens, the conformer can easily be put back in. To put the conformer back in your child's eye:

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Wash the conformer well with soap and water.
- Raise your child's upper eyelid with the thumb of one hand. Gently slide the conformer under the upper lid just enough to make room to push the conformer into the socket.
- Now slide the conformer into place.

Your child's doctor will show you how to put the conformer back in before you leave the hospital.

When will my child be fitted for a prosthetic eye?



Prosthetic eye

One to two months after your child's eye is removed, the doctor will see your child for an exam under anesthesia. During this exam, an ocularist, an eye care specialist that specializes in making prosthetic eyes, will take a "mold" of your child's eye socket.

With this mold, the ocularist will make and fit your child's prosthetic eye. This will take a couple of weeks. To make your child's eye the ocularist will:

- Take a mold of your child's eye socket.
- Shape a white plastic shell that will take the place of the conformer and become the prosthetic eye.
- Paint the iris, the colored part of the eye, on the plastic shell to match your child's other eye.
- Fit the plastic shell into your child's eye socket over the top of the implant.

The Ophthalmology department will help you choose an Ocularist for your child. The Ocularist will show you how to care for and handle your child's prosthetic eye. The Ocularist also provides long-term care for your child's prosthetic through regular examinations.

Your child's Ocularist is checked below:

- Erickson Labs Northwest, Kirkland 425-823-1861
- Erickson Laboratories, Seattle 206-622-9175
- Greg Sankey; BCO, Seattle 206-522-4222