Discharge Instructions for Eye Muscle Surgery

What changes should I look for?

• Your child’s eye will be red in the white of the eye or appear bloodshot.
• There will be some mild swelling of the lids and a small amount of pink or red drainage. Tears will be pink-tinged for 1 to 2 days.
• You may see slight bruising below the eye.
• After the second day, if the eyelid is red or warm, has a large increase in swelling, or an increase in discharge call the clinic at 206-987-2177.
• The eyes may not be straight after surgery. The eyes need time to heal. Your child’s eye alignment will be checked at the 6 to 8-week appointment.

When can my child eat?

• Nausea and vomiting (throwing up) are common after surgery. If this occurs, a clear liquid diet given slowly will help.
• When fully awake, your child may have clear liquids and small snacks like 7-Up, Jell-O, Popsicles and apple juice.
• If the food stays down and your child remains fully awake, they can return to their regular diet.

How should I care for my child’s eyes?

• Avoid rubbing the eye.
• It may be hard for your child to open their eyes the next morning due to dried drainage on eyelashes. Wipe drainage off by using a washcloth or cotton balls dipped in warm water.
• Apply eye ointment or drops (Tobradex) 3 times per day for 1 week. The best way to apply ointment is to have a second person hold your child’s head. Gently pull down the lower lid and squeeze about a ¼-inch line into the space. Use this only if recommended by your doctor.
• Drops are best given by having your child lie down. Then have your child look up, and place a drop in the lower lid. Pressure used to open the lids should be placed on the brow and cheek, not on the eyeball.
• A cold compress can be used to reduce swelling and discomfort if needed.
• Starting 2 hours after surgery, you may apply a cold compress to the eyelid for 15 minutes at a time until bedtime. Frozen peas or gel packs are OK.
When can my child get wet?
Your child may shower or take a bath after the surgery. Do not swim for 2 weeks.

How much activity can my child do?
Your child may be sleepy the day of surgery and may take an extra nap.
- Most children can go back to normal activity in 24 hours.
- Your child can move their eyes as much as is comfortable after surgery.
- Your child may notice double vision immediately after surgery. If so, reassure your child that this usually goes away in a few days or weeks.
- Ask your doctor if there are other activity restrictions for your child.

What should I give my child for pain?
- Discomfort is common after surgery, but should get better after the first day.
- A cold compress over the eye(s) will help.
- You may give regular Tylenol (acetaminophen) to your child. Follow the dosage instructions on the package. Wait at least 4 hours between doses.
- If your child’s pain is not well controlled with Tylenol alone you can alternate giving Tylenol and Ibuprofen. You can give one medication and then the other 4 hours later.
- Use these medicines only if recommend by your healthcare provider. Check with your doctor first before giving any type of medicine to your child.

When should I call a doctor?
If your child is having any problems, call our office at 206-987-2177 during the day. After hours, call 206-987-2000 to reach the ophthalmology doctor on call. Please have your pharmacy information available.

Call us if your child has any of these warning signs:
- Unable to drink liquids for 24 hours
- Fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C)
- Increased eyelid redness or swelling or increased eye discharge (fluid) from the eye after day 2 of surgery
- Rapid swelling or bleeding at the site of surgery
- Pain persists or increases after the second day

Follow your surgeon’s instructions for making a postoperative appointment.