



ALFORD ENT AND
FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY
6560 Fannin Street, Suite 704
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Blepharoplasty (Eyelid Surgery)

Our goal is for you to have the most successful surgical outcome; therefore, we provide these instructions based on Dr. Alford's experience performing many Blepharoplasty surgeries. Please attempt to follow these instructions faithfully; those that do so generally have the smoothest postoperative course.

Swelling/Discoloration

It is expected following this procedure for the eyelids to swell and show considerable bruising. Most swelling usually resolves quickly over 1-2 days (more slowly if you suffer from allergies), while the discoloration will diminish more gradually over 7-10 days. You may notice that one eye may be slightly more or less swollen than the other – this is normal and is not cause for concern. Also, a feeling of overall tightness is normal. Do not be discouraged by swelling and discoloration. These conditions are a normal part of healing following a blepharoplasty procedure and will subside within approximately 2 weeks.

Occasionally, swelling may cause the lower lid to become separated from the eye and may lead to incomplete eyelid closure for a few days. Both of these conditions will resolve as swelling diminishes. Tearing or eye irritation, if present, will usually resolve as swelling decreases and eyelids close. You will be given prescription eye medications to lessen this irritation.

Some patients may experience discoloration in the whites of their eyes. This condition is painless, generally subsides within 7-10 days and will not harm your vision.

Frozen Pea Packs

Frozen English peas (from your grocer), placed in a Ziploc® bag, provide the simplest and most effective cold compress to reduce swelling, discoloration, and discomfort following surgery. During your waking hours, apply pea packs to your eyes as often as possible for the first 48-hours following surgery. You may continue to use the pea packs as much as you like for up to 7 days after your surgery. Any other "ice packs" are too heavy for this delicate and sensitive area that is why Frozen English Peas in a Ziploc® are specified.

Pain Medications

There is little, if any, pain associated with blepharoplasty surgery. You may experience a dull ache and tightness in the eyelids, but it is very unusual to have significant, sharp pain. If cold compresses do not provide sufficient relief from the discomfort associated with the blepharoplasty, take Extra Strength Tylenol® according to the package instructions. If you are not sufficiently relieved of pain, try alternating doses of Extra Strength Tylenol® and the pain medication prescribed by Dr. Alford. If you have increasing eye pain or any "burning" of the eyelids, please inform Dr. Alford.

Eye Medications

You will be given a prescription for an eye ointment to be used nightly and an antibiotic eye drop to be used twice a day (morning and night). We also recommend you use over-the-counter artificial tears throughout the day as needed for eye dryness/irritation.

Antibiotics

You will take an oral antibiotic for 7 to 14 days following your surgery. All antibiotics should be taken according to the directions given by the pharmacy, with food or liquids to prevent nausea and promote proper absorption of the medication (do not consume milk or dairy products when taking your antibiotic as they may inactivate many medicines). Take the full course of this antibiotic as instructed by your physician. Please do not stop taking it because you “feel better” as this may cause unwanted bacterial resistance.

Nausea

Nausea develops following many types of surgery. You will be given a prescription medication, Zofran, to take if you develop any nausea. This is an orally disintegrating tablet that is quickly absorbed when placed under the tongue.

Temperature

A low grade temperature up to 100°F may be expected following surgery as the body is healing. If you have a persistent temperature 101.5 degrees or greater that is not relieved by Tylenol®, please call Dr. Alford’s office.

Bleeding

If you experience oozing or bleeding along the suture line, do not rub the area but apply gentle pressure to the area using sterile gauze followed by a cold compress. Pressure and cold compress should be effective; however, if these measures do not stop any oozing/bleeding, please inform Dr. Alford.

Visual Disturbance

You can expect to have very slight blurring of vision for a few days due to swelling and ointment still present in the eyes from surgery. Any progressive or one sided decrease in vision should be reported to Dr. Alford immediately.

Cysts

It is not uncommon for very small, white inclusion cysts to appear near the suture line in the first few weeks to a few months following surgery. These can easily be managed in Dr. Alford’s office during a postoperative visit.

Incision Care

In most patients, small anti-tension adhesive strips (Steri-Strips®) will be placed over the sutures of the upper eyelids to support the outer corner of the eyes. Avoid getting these Steri-Strips wet until they are removed at the 1 week post op appointment. Do not wet or apply anything to the sutures. Dr. Alford will address incision care further at your 1 week post op appointment.

Scars

During the first several days following surgery, the scars will be imperceptible. They then go through a period of slight swelling and reddening, especially at the outer corners. As this subsides, the scars become virtually invisible again. This is the normal maturity process of scars. Any unevenness of the edges of the incisions or lumpiness of the scars is usually temporary and will subside with the passage of time.

Following, are some recommendations directed at relieving discomfort and speeding the recovery process:

- **REST IN BED OR A CHAIR** for the first 24 hours following surgery. Be sure to keep your head elevated.
- **USE YOUR EYEDROPS** or eye ointment, as prescribed, to help ease any discomfort or irritation caused by incomplete eyelid closure.
- **AVOID HITTING OR BUMPING YOUR FACE AND NECK.** It is wise not to pick up small children and you should sleep alone for one week after your operation.
- **APPLY COLD COMPRESSES** (see “Frozen Pea Packs”) as often as possible for the first 48 hours.
- **AVOID BENDING, STRAINING, HEAVY LIFTING** for the first week following surgery. In addition to aggravating swelling, these activities may elevate blood pressure and start bleeding.
- **AVOID EXCESSIVE SMILING OR YAWNING** for one week.
- **AVOID EXERCISE** for 2 weeks.
- **DO NOT SMOKE** and **AVOID ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION** for 3 weeks after surgery. Both of these activities can significantly slow the healing process.
- **REPORT ANY SUDDEN SWELLING OR INCREASED DISCOLORATION** to Dr. Alford.
- **SLEEP IN AN UPRIGHT POSITION**, preferably on your back, by elevating the head of the bed and using extra pillows for at least one week following surgery.
- **AVOID STRAINING DURING ELIMINATION.** If you need a laxative, we recommend Miralax™ (available without a prescription at any pharmacy). Proper diet, plenty of water and walking are strongly recommended to avoid constipation.

Your Postoperative Visit

Your first post op visit will be 7 days after your surgery. At this time the Steri-Strips and sutures will be removed. Following suture removal, you will be asked to return to the office for follow-up evaluation at 2 weeks after your surgery and again at 1 month postoperatively.

Resuming Activities

1. **WEARING GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES.** Eyeglasses may be worn immediately. Contact lenses should not be used until Dr. Alford tells you that it is safe to do so. When you do resume using your contact lenses, be careful not to put any tension on the suture lines when inserting the lenses.
2. **PERSONAL GROOMING.**
 - You may shower and gently wash your hair with Neutrogena® shampoo 2 days after surgery. Careful to avoid getting eye area and sutures wet.
 - You may use a blow dryer on cold setting only.
 - You may have your hair washed at a salon one week after your surgery, but do not sit under a hair dryer, use a hand blow dryer on cold setting.
 - Face makeup may be used sparingly 2 days after surgery being careful to avoid getting makeup on the sutures.
 - Eye makeup may be applied one day after the sutures have been removed.
 - Do not pull or stretch the eyelids for the first 10 days following surgery.
 - Gently sponge wash your face avoiding the eye/suture areas as they are not to get wet until after your 1 week post op appointment.
3. **HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES.** On your second postoperative day, you are encouraged to be up and around the house with your usual activities except those specifically outlined previously (no bending, no heavy lifting, etc.). No strenuous activity.
4. **PULLOVER CLOTHING.** For 1 week following surgery, you should wear clothing that fastens either in the front or at the back rather than the type that must be pulled over the head.
5. **AVOID EXERCISE** for two weeks following surgery.
6. **AVOID PROLONGED READING AND/OR TELEVISION/COMPUTER VIEWING** for the first 2-3 days, to avoid eye fatigue.
7. **REDUCE EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT.** Following surgery, your eyes may be more sensitive to bright light for a few days. Wearing sunglasses is recommended.
8. **RETURNING TO WORK AND RESUMING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.** When you return to work depends on the amount of physical activity and public contact your job involves and also the amount of swelling and discoloration you develop; the average person is ready to return to work or go out socially 5-7 days following surgery.

Reminders:

Call Dr. Alford's office if you experience:

- Sudden swelling or increased discoloration.
- Increasing eye pain or any burning of the eyelids.
- Any progressive or one-sided decrease in vision.
- Persistent temperature above 101.5 degrees that is not relieved by Tylenol®.

It is of utmost importance that you take care of yourself and be patient during the healing process. It is our pleasure to care for you and we welcome all questions, so please feel free to call Dr. Alford's office: **713-532-3223**.