



STRABISMUS POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

With strabismus or eye muscle surgery, recovery time depends on how extensive the procedure was. However, most patients are able to return to their normal activities within a day or two of treatment. You can expect a certain range of side effects during your strabismus surgery recovery, from redness to discomfort. Generally, these postoperative symptoms take a few weeks to a few months to disappear completely. In general, patients see their final results within a month or two of surgery.

Immediately after Surgery

Eye muscle surgery is an outpatient procedure which typically lasts between 30 minutes and two hours. Once the surgeon finishes, patients need an hour or so to wake up from the anesthesia. During this time, your doctor will monitor you to make sure there are no unintended aftereffects. Some patients require suture adjustment a few hours after surgery, which is typically involves little to no discomfort.

Common Symptoms after Treatment

Minor discomfort, bruising, and swelling are all common after **strabismus surgery**. Most patients are able to **manage any discomfort with over-the-counter medications**. In addition, you may notice pink or reddish tears or other mucus discharge. These are normal for the first few days after surgery. You can wipe them away with a damp cloth.

The surface of your eye will likely appear bright red for a while after strabismus surgery. This redness is essentially a bruise. Since blood is closer to the surface of the eye, bruising is typically a brighter color. For some patients, **redness clears within a few days**, while for others, it may take several weeks or even a few months to disappear.

You may also experience double vision after their surgery. This issue is normal as it can take a few days or weeks for the brain to adjust to the new eye position. The alignment of your eyes will also change throughout the healing process. **It may take several months before you reach your final alignment.**

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At-Home Care

Most patients return to their normal activities quickly after treatment. You can perform basic tasks within a few hours or days, depending on the natural healing speed of your body. As a general rule of thumb, **if you can perform an activity without any pain, there is no reason to avoid it.** However, you should:

- You may remove the eye patch after 24 hours.
- Start antibiotic eyedrop (Tobradex) twice a day for 7 days.
- Sleep with the plastic eye shield taped over the eye for 7 days.
- Take Tylenol as needed for pain. Avoid NSAIDs (e.g. Advil or ibuprofen).
- Use OTC preservative free artificial tears (e.g Refresh plus) every 1-2 hours as needed for discomfort.
- Start “Pencil Push Ups” 20 times daily
 - Use a pencil or another item to track.
 - Look all the way to the right and hold it for the count of 10.
 - Repeat 20 times a day.

- Keep irritants, such as shampoo, out of eyes for two to three days. You may shower after a few days, but avoid the water directly hitting the eye or face.
- Avoid swimming for at least a week.
- Take all medications, including eye drops, as directed.
- Apply ice packs as needed to help with pain and swelling
- Avoid wearing contact lenses for one to two weeks
- Attend all follow-up appointments.
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Following all of your doctor's **post-operative instructions** can **prevent infection** and minimize scarring or other complications from the procedure.

When to Call Your Doctor

Keep in mind that **discomfort, swelling, and pink-colored tears are normal for the first few days**. However, if your symptoms do not begin to improve or dramatically worsen after that time, you may need to see a doctor. **Contact your doctor right away** if you:

- Has pus or thick discharge
- Begins to run a fever
- Has new or worsened eye pain
- Experiences sudden vision changes
- Develops light sensitivity
- Bleeds from the eye

You should also seek help if medication does not help with discomfort.

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