

After your cataract surgery

Immediately after your operation

Most patients go home after their cataract surgery an hour or two after the operation. This is once they have had something to eat and had their post operative instructions from the nurses and the post operative drops. Following an operation involving sedation or general anaesthetic then it may be several hours before a patient is ready to go home. On discharge, the operated eye will be covered by an eye pad to protect it. If the operation is in the morning, the pad can be removed at home at tea time. For an afternoon operation the pad can be removed the following morning. Once the pad has been removed the eye drops can then be started.

The eye pad consists of a white dressing and on top of this is a transparent plastic shield. The white dressing can be discarded once the eye pad has been removed but the transparent plastic shield can be taped back over the operated eye just before retiring to bed for the first post operative week. This is to prevent any accidental knocks damaging the eye during the first week of healing.

Will my eye be painful?

Sometimes the eye is a little bit gritty after the operation due to the tiny incision on the surface of the eye, but it should not be painful. Any discomfort should settle by using regular Paracetamol tablets for the first few days, as necessary, following the instructions on the packaging.

The first few weeks

The eye will be more sensitive after surgery. It may sting more than usual and become red if shampoo or other make up gets into the eye. You should therefore take great care with these in the first two weeks after surgery.

It is not uncommon to notice a bright, intermittent flickering sensation at the outer part of the vision of the operated eye for the first few weeks. This is just a result of the lens settling into position and is to be expected. However, if a very noticeable onset of flashing lights associated with new floaters develops then you should contact Mr McLean for advice.

Post-operative follow-up

Mr McLean will arrange to see you again two weeks or so after surgery in order to check that the eye is healing normally. It may be necessary to have your glasses updated after cataract surgery, but you must wait 4-5 weeks from the date of the operation.

Do's and Don'ts

Do

- Take your eye drops as prescribed every day
- Wear your plastic eye shield at night in bed for the first week
- Feel free to take up most of your regular activities, such as exercise, within a week. It is better to avoid swimming for the first two weeks after surgery.
- Do resume driving once you have discussed this with Mr McLean

- Do contact Mr McLean if the vision is becoming progressively more blurry, the operated eye more red and painful. This could indicated an infection requiring an immediate review

Don't

- Drive yourself home on the day of surgery
- Rub the eye or put anything in it except the prescribed post operative drops
- Lift anything heavy (more than 20lbs) in the first week after surgery