



WATERFRONT
PRIVATE HOSPITAL

EYELID SURGERY AFTERCARE

The advice below is general and will apply to the average patient. It should be a guide. All patients are different, and some will recover quicker than others.

If you have only had upper eyelids surgery under local, your recovery will be quicker.

Before you leave the hospital

Medications - You will receive painkillers before discharge and chloramphenicol eye ointment.

Dressings – You need no dressings, but you may be given some gauze for wet compresses.

Follow-up appointments - An appointment will be made for you before you leave for a wound check and removal of stitches with a nurse.

Have someone take you home after surgery.

When you get home

Week 1

Get plenty of rest, and don't overdo things.

Your eyes will **swell**, and you will have **noticeable bruising** early on.



It is not uncommon to have some **bleeding** during the first 24 hours. **Keep your head upright and apply gentle pressure** to the bleeding area, and it will stop.

You will experience some **discomfort**. **Take pain medication as prescribed**. Pain is usually not too significant a feature with eyelid surgery.

You will have some discomfort and bruising around your **thigh** or **tummy** if you have had fat transfer to your cheeks/ eyes.

Sleeping position - Sleep with your head raised on a couple of pillows, especially during the first week.

Showering/ bathing - You can shower, **but keep your eyes and the paper stitches (steri-strips) dry**. Do not be alarmed if some of the steri-strips come off but try to keep them on if you can.

Bruising and swelling will worsen before it improves and may travel down your face (with gravity). Try to keep your head upright and avoid stooping over.

What if I have a “black eye” and can’t see through my eye because it is so swollen? Do not worry; this can happen, and as long as the swelling is soft, it will settle down after a few days.

Use cold compresses (gauze soaked with cool tap water).

Use your antibiotic ointment at night only – apply this to the inside of your eyes or on your lashes – it will blur your vision, so only use it at night.

Clean the inside of your eyes in the morning with a cotton bud.

Your mood may fluctuate after surgery, and you may have doubts about having had the procedure! Don't worry; this is not uncommon, and you will feel better as the swelling and appearance improve.

Keep mobile, as this will reduce the risk of blood clots in the legs (if you have had a general anaesthetic).

Avoid smoking for at least two weeks, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

Avoid alcohol when taking pain medications. Even if you are not taking pain medications, it is advisable to avoid alcohol for three weeks as it can cause fluid retention, which may worsen swelling.

Nurse appointment at the end of week 1

You will have an appointment after 6-7 days to have your stitches removed. The nurses can answer any questions.



Typical appearance of eyes 1 week after upper and lower eyelids surgery with fat transfer to cheeks.

When can I go back to work?

Return to work will depend on your recovery and job. We recommend taking at least one week off work. You will still be bruised, so it will be obvious that you have had surgery at this stage. You can usually use make-up (after 1 week) to cover bruising.

Week 2

Your bruising and swelling will continue to improve during this week.



Typical appearance after 2 weeks

You can now **shower as normal and get your wounds wet.**

Driving – You can resume driving at this stage.

You can stop using the antibiotic ointment at night.

Weeks 3 and 4

All the bruising and 90% of the swelling should have settled over this period.

When can I fly after surgery?

Check with your airline and insurance company before flying. It'll depend on your airline's regulations and the flight duration. If in doubt, please ask your surgeon.

Risk of DVT

If you're flying after recent surgery, especially when your mobility has been restricted, you're at an increased risk of [deep vein thrombosis \(DVT\)](#), a blood clot in one of the deep veins in your body, usually in your legs.

Guidance

For medium-haul (3-6 hours) and long-haul (6-12 hours) and as a guide, allow **2-3 weeks** after upper and lower eyelid surgery. You could fly around 1 week after surgery for short haul (less than 3 hours) flights. You can take steps to reduce your risk of DVT, such as drinking plenty of water, using your Ted stockings, and moving around on the plane. The risk of developing a travel-related DVT is low, even if you're classed as moderate to high risk.

Travel Insurance

Check your travel insurance policy carefully, as you may need to inform the insurance company you have recently had surgery.

1 month and onwards

You will feel back to normal after 1 month. You may continue to experience **watering or dryness** of your eyes.

If your eyes are dry, you may need to use **eye drops**. These can be purchased over the counter.

Your scars will continue to improve over this period. In younger patients (below 45), your scars can remain red for longer periods. The redness should have settled after a few months and certainly by 6 months.

Please contact us if you have any **pull on your lower eyelid**. Some exercises and massages can help.

Exercise

You can resume gentle exercise after 4 weeks and build up to more strenuous exercise by the end of week 6.

Avoid swimming for 3 months as chlorine can irritate your scars.

Scar care

Healing is gradual, but eyelid scars generally heal well.

It is helpful to massage your scars with a plain moisturiser gently. You may feel lumpy areas on the outer part of your eyes – these will settle with time.

When to call/ get in touch

- If you have increased swelling or bruising, which is not settling and feels hard and painful.
- Bleeding, which does not stop.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have a temperature over 38 degrees Celsius.
- If you have any **persistent** yellowish or greenish discharge from the incisions.
- If you have an obvious pull on your lower eyelid

Further advice

If you are uncertain about anything or require further advice, please contact us at hello@waterfronthospital.co.uk