

## Retina and Vitreous Eye Surgery - Vitrectomy -

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### What is retina and vitreous eye surgery?

The retina is a thin layer of tissue that lines the inside of the eye. The vitreous is the jelly-like substance that fills most of the inside of the eye. A vitrectomy removes the vitreous fluid and replaces it with a special clear fluid. During this procedure, your surgeon can repair many eye problems. Your surgeon will tell you why you are having this surgery.

The surgeon uses very fine instruments to do this. Each one is put into the eye through small incisions. One instrument shines a light inside your eye so the surgeon can see. Another one is used to remove the fluid. Other instruments are used to repair problems. The surgeon does all of this by looking through a special operating microscope.

### How will I feel after surgery?

Your eye may be red and tender to touch. You may have some discomfort. Your eye may be itchy or feel like there is something in it. This is normal. You may take pain pills such as Tylenol or other medication ordered by your surgeon.

If the pain is severe after you go home, call your surgeon.



### What activities can I do after surgery?

You may get up after your surgery. Ask the nurse to help you the first time you get up. Avoid lying on the same side as your operated eye, unless your surgeon tells you this is all right.

You may watch television, but you may find your vision blurry at first.

You may have a bath or shower. Avoid getting soapy water in your eye but it will not harm the healing process. Do not wash your hair for a few days.

Avoid any bending or lifting for 1 week after surgery. After 1 week, you may do light housework and bend over to pick up light objects. Then, gradually resume your regular activities.

## What can I eat after surgery?

You will be able to eat your usual diet as soon as you feel like it, if you had a local anesthetic.

If you had a general anesthetic, eat light meals the day of your surgery and return to your regular diet the next day.

## How do I care for my eye?

Keep the eye patch or shield on until the next day, when you see your surgeon. You may need to use eye drops or ointment after eye surgery. Your surgeon will tell you what to use and how.

Wear your glasses and sunglasses during the day to protect your eye.

Wear your eye shield at night if ordered. Put one strip of tape on the eye shield before you put it over your eye. Put the eye shield in place and add a second piece of tape to hold the shield in place.

## How to put eye drops in your eye

Follow any instructions your surgeon gives you about using eye drops. If you do not have special instructions, follow these steps:

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Read the label to check that you have the right medication.
3. Sit or lie down and tilt your head back at least 45 degrees.
4. Gently pull down the lower lid of your eye with one hand. This makes a small pocket between your eyelid and eyeball.
5. Hold the eye drop bottle with your other hand and rest your hand against your cheek bone.
6. Look up towards the top of your head and put a drop in the pocket formed between your eyelid and eyeball.



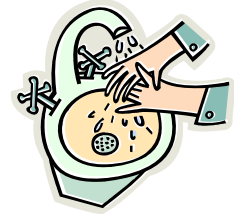
**Avoid touching your eye with the tip of the bottle. Do not hold the bottle too high or the drop will splash and you will not get all the medication in your eye.**

If you have trouble putting in eye drops, ask a family member or friend to help. You may wish to buy a drop aid from the drugstore.

## How to put in eye ointment

Follow any instructions your surgeon gives you about using eye ointment. If you do not have special instructions, follow these steps:

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Warm the tube of ointment in your hand.  
Do not store the ointment in the refrigerator.
3. Pull down the lower lid to make a small pocket between the lower lid and your eyeball.
4. Gently put about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (6 to 12 mm) of medication in this pocket.



**Avoid touching your eye with the tip of the tube.**

Eye ointment can make your vision blurry. Wait until you can see clearly before you start any activity.

## When do I see the surgeon again?

You will be given an appointment to see your surgeon the day after your surgery. It is important to keep this appointment. The surgeon will remove the eye patch or shield and check your eye.

Fill any prescriptions you have been given. Bring all your eye medications and any forms you need filled out to this appointment. This is a good time to ask about any questions or concerns you have about your recovery.

## When will I get new glasses?

Your surgeon will tell you when you will get a new prescription for glasses. This is about 6 to 12 weeks after your eye surgery.

## Contact your surgeon if you have:

- eye pain that becomes severe
- sudden decrease in vision



**If you cannot contact your surgeon, go to the Emergency Department of the hospital where you had your surgery.**

**Special instructions:**