

# After Eye Plaque Removal Surgery

## Information for patients and families

Read this information to learn:

- how to care for yourself at home
- what activities are safe to do
- what problems to look for
- about your follow-up appointment
- who to call if you have questions



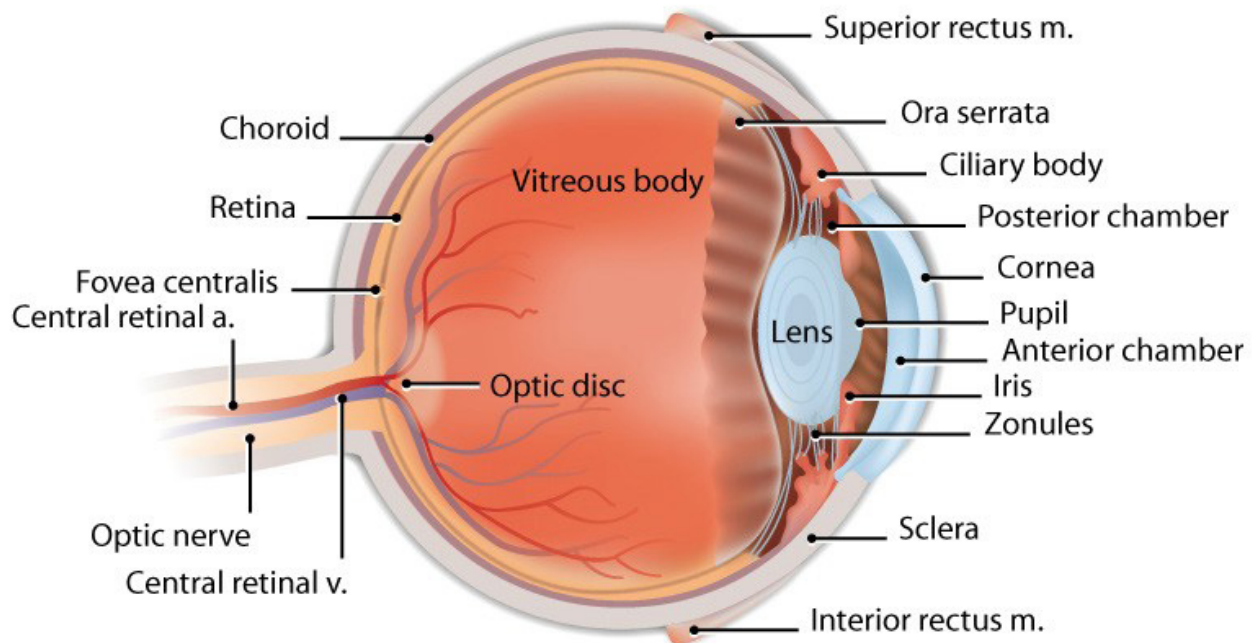
### **You have had an anesthetic or narcotic medicine.**

- Do not drive a car or drink alcohol for 24 hours.
- Have a responsible adult stay with you overnight.



## What is eye plaque removal surgery?

You had a radioactive plaque inserted into your eye to treat your tumour. The plaque stayed in your eye for a few days to give radiation directly to the cancer.



You have had your eye plaque removed because your treatment time is over.

Now that the surgeon has removed the plaque, all the radiation in your eye is gone and you will no longer give off any radiation. If there was an eye muscle detached as a step during the first surgery, it has now been put back in place.

## Should I wear bandages over my eye after my surgery?

The bandage that your surgeon placed over your eye must stay the way it is until the next morning. You will need to take the bandage off the next morning to start your eye medicines.

When you arrive home after surgery, try to leave your operated eye uncovered to make your eye muscles stronger. If you find it more comfortable, you can use an eyepatch for the first few days after surgery.

**Important:** Keep your eye covered when going outside for the first week after surgery. This helps to protect your eye from infections.

You can wear protective glasses or a clean eye patch. You can buy eye patches from your local pharmacy.

## What eye medicines do I take after surgery?

Start your medicines the morning after your surgery. You must take these medicines for 2 weeks after surgery.

The medicines are:

- Antibiotics and steroids eye drops (for example Tobradex eye drops) 3 times a day
- Eye muscle relaxant eye drops (for example Homatropine 2% eye drops) 3 times a day
- Antibiotics and steroids eye ointment (for example Tobradex eye ointment) once at bed time

The drops and ointment are the same ones that you used after your plaque insertion surgery. You can keep using the same drops and ointment, but we will give you a new set of these medicines.

You will follow the same schedule for your medicines as when the plaque was inserted.



**Remember:** Wash your hands before you put in your eye medicines.

## **How will my eye be after surgery?**

You can expect some of these things to happen after surgery:

- A little bit of blood and mucus in your tears. This is normal for a week after surgery.
- Your eye can be a bit red and swollen because there may be some stitches left in your eye. The stitches can take 4 to 6 weeks to fall off on their own.
- Objects may look a bit blurry and darker than normal.

## **How do I care for my eye?**

If you have some build-up of mucus after surgery, gently wash the outside of your eyelid with a warm washcloth. Move the cloth from the inner corner of your eye (close to your nose) to the outer part of your eye.

- Do not rub your eye for the first 2 weeks after surgery.
- Do not put any creams near your eye or put any makeup on your eye for the first 2 weeks after surgery.
- Do not wear contact lenses for the first 2 weeks after surgery.

## **When can I shower or take a bath?**

You can take a shower or bath 2 days after your surgery.

### **For 5 days:**

- Do not wash or wet your hair, head or face.
- Keep your eye covered with a clean patch when you are taking a shower or bath.
- Use a clean wash cloth to gently wash around your eye patch.

## **How much pain will I have?**

Most patients feel much more comfortable after the plaque is removed than when the plaque was inserted.

If needed, the doctor may give you a prescription for pain medicine to take home. Take it to a pharmacy to get it filled and follow the directions on the bottle.

If you do not have too much pain, you can take pain relievers such as acetaminophen (regular strength Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil), unless your doctor tells you these medicines are not safe.

## **What can I eat and drink?**

You can go back to eating and drinking what you normally would. Slowly start by having fluids and soups on the day of the surgery. Then return to your normal diet the next day.

- If you feel nauseated (sick to your stomach) or you are vomiting, you can get anti-nausea medicine such as Gravol. You can buy it from your pharmacy without a prescription.
- Take the anti-nausea medicine as directed and drink liquids until the nausea passes. Then slowly start to eat what you usually eat.

## **What activities are safe?**

- When you go home, rest on the first day.
- The next day you can slowly start to get back to your everyday activities. It is safe to bend, stoop, cough, walk outside and watch TV. You can also sleep on any side.



## **Things you should not do:**

- No tiring physical activities or sports such as swimming, jogging, gardening or shovelling snow
- Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds (about 5 kilograms) for the first few days after surgery
- After 2 weeks you should be able to return to your usual routine and activities

### **Can I drive?**

You can only start driving if your vision is not blurry, doubled or affected by the surgery.

It is safer to NOT drive until you see your doctor 2 weeks after the surgery.

### **Is it safe to travel home the same day after surgery?**

You can travel home by plane, train or car on the same day of your plaque removal, but you must have a responsible adult help bring you home. We recommend that someone stay with you the night of your surgery.

### **Do I still need the green card?**

You do not need to carry the green card after the eye plaque has been removed.



## When should I get medical help?

If you notice any of these symptoms, call your nurse or doctor:

- A lot of bleeding from your eye that does not stop
- Sudden increase in pain
- Any part of the eye becomes more swollen
- Vision loss or no vision in the eye that was operated on

If you have any of these symptoms, call the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre at 416 946 2000 and ask to be transferred to the Ocular Oncology Service. They will find the ocular oncologist on-call.



**If you cannot reach a nurse or doctor or you are from out of town, go to your nearest emergency department.**

## When is my follow-up appointment?

You should have a check-up appointment with an eye specialist (ophthalmologist) 2 weeks after your plaque is taken out.

- **If you are from Toronto or live nearby:** Return to the Ocular Oncology Clinic at Princess Margaret Cancer Centre in 2 weeks. After that your doctor will tell you how often they will need to see you.
- **If you live outside the province or very far from Toronto:** You can see your local ophthalmologist. Be sure to come back to Princess Margaret Cancer Centre 3 to 6 months after your surgery to check how well the plaque radiotherapy worked. Your surgeon will let you know when to visit.

Your surgeon will tell you how many times you'll need to have blood tests or other tests during your follow-up appointment.

## Who do I call if I have questions?

### [Ocular Oncology Clinic](#)

Princess Margaret Cancer Centre  
610 University Ave., 18th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5G 2M9  
Phone: 416 946 2000 ext. 4802

Call Princess Margaret Locating if you need more help at 416 946 2000. If you have any questions about the eye plaque surgery, talk to your ophthalmologist or contact the Corporate Radiation Safety Office at 416 340 4801.

## Special instructions

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