

THE BLEPHAROPLASTY PATHWAY – RICHARD CAESAR SURGERY

BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

- Jobs:** Clear as many of the more physical jobs you have, in order to be ready to take it easy for a week after your surgery.
- Shopping:** Cold compress. (Frozen peas are actually ideal. Keep them frozen until the day of surgery, then move them to the fridge. You want them fridge cold, not frozen.)
- Arnica - Cream or tablets.
- Your ideal recovery is feet up, very relaxed. Have some films, music, books or podcasts lined up.
- Stock up the fridge with things you like. You should treat yourself during the first week. You may not want to go out for the first week or two.
- Hair:** You can shower and wash immediately after surgery, but If you like to wash your hair by hanging your head down over a bath, this is best avoided for a week.
- Medicine:** Take all your medicine as normal but try to avoid aspirin and ibuprofen, unless on a regular prescription from your GP.

THE DAY OF SURGERY

- Clothes:** I need to apply an earthing plate to your stomach. This is for the electric scalpel that minimises bleeding and bruising. Please wear clothes that will allow easy access to the skin on the side of your stomach.
- Make-up:** Please don't wear any eye make-up. If essential, please remove it just prior to coming into the Hospital.
- Medicine:** Take all your medicine as normal.
- Driving:** You will need a lift home. In theory you could drive yourself, but there is a risk of the wound oozing and some blood blurring your vision. Much nicer to have a lift.

THE ACTUAL SURGERY

- Consent:** I'll need to get confirmation that I have your permission to operate on you by your signing a consent form prior to the surgery. You'll then be taken into the operating theatre, where we make sure you're comfortable on the bed, and attach the earthing plate to your stomach.

Anaesthetic:	I'll apply drops to your eyes to prevent the skin preparation iodine from stinging.
Marking:	I then take my time drawing my exact surgical plan onto each of your upper lids.
Anaesthetic injection:	Unless you've chosen sedation or general anaesthetic, I'll now inject local anaesthetic under the skin of your upper lid. This stings briefly but works quickly. Your eyelids will feel swollen and strange.
Surgery:	Once I confirm you're numb, I excise the excess skin and trim the muscle and fat to perform the blepharoplasty. You will feel no pain but will feel some heat and there is a smell of cauterised skin. Once this is complete, I suture the wound, apply ointment, gauze and pad and transfer you to recovery. During the surgery you'll be nervous until you realise that you will not feel any pain, at which point it can be quite relaxing.
Recovery:	<p>You'll lie flat with a cold compress on your eyes for the next 40 mins. You're effectively blindfolded, which can be disconcerting. Bring your headphones and music if that would help.</p> <p>I'll take your pads off, have a look to check all is well and sit you up so you can have a tea or coffee. The nurse will normally go through your post-op instructions and give you your eye ointment and antibiotic tablets to take home.</p>
Home:	<p>At home take it easy. You should not be in much pain, but some ache is typical. Take some paracetamol. Take stronger painkillers as required, but this is unusual. Your wound will be slowly but surely swelling and bruising and may ooze. This is all normal.</p> <p>This ooze can continue through the night. Don't have your best pillowcase, sheets or duvet cover on your bed as they can be flecked with blood in the morning.</p>

POST OPERATIVE

Bruising and swelling:	Your eyes will bruise and swell for the first 3 days. Each day a little worse than the last. This can be disturbing, but by day 4 you should be improving again. Taking it easy and using the cold compress helps, but the bruising and swelling will happen.
Pain:	You should be in very little pain. Generally, you will feel better than you initially look.
Cold Compress:	<p>If you can, apply your cold compress for 10 minutes in every waking hour for the first 5 days. This will help with the swelling.</p> <p>Please put a small piece of clean cloth on the forehead to avoid ice cream headache. Second layer of kitchen roll is ideal, with first layer discarded.</p>
Eye Ointment:	Apply the ointment along the stitch line 4 times daily for 2 weeks, then twice a day for the next 2 weeks.

- Eye Drops:** Tobradex Eye drop to be used one drop each eye 4 times a day. (Lower lid surgery only)
- Clean Eyes:** Cooled boiled water is sterile. Use eye makeup removal pads. Do not wipe your eyes, just pat along stitch line.
- Sleeping:** Any way you are most comfortable!
Sleeping propped up can minimise post op swelling, but not sleeping due to trying to sleep propped up can make you feel miserable. The bruising and swelling will always go eventually.
- Sunglasses:** Wear all the time whilst outside, even if it's cloudy. The UV light is not good for your scar.
- Antibiotics:** Take as prescribed.
- Make-up:** Avoid make up to your upper lids for the first 2 weeks. You can apply cover up if you have bruising that extends to your lower eyelid.
- Driving:** You should be able to drive the next day.
- Exercise:** Gentle exercise is OK. Try to avoid anything strenuous for the first week. Walking slowly on the flat ,for example, is OK but marching uphill not so good.

FOLLOW UP

- Phone call:** I'll ring you to check all is well, usually on day 2 or 3 when you may need some moral support. I'll also have given you my contact details so you can call or text me at any point.
- Suture removal:** Unless you have dissolving stitches, I'll need to see you after a week to take your stitches out. This is very easy, especially if you've applied the ointment to the stitches regularly. The stitches will start to itch at about day 5 and you'll be pleased to have them out.

RECOVERY

- Week 1:** The first week is a voyage of discovery. The bruising and swelling can be more than you expect, as you expect or less than you expect. There is quite a large spectrum of normal.
- Week 2:** This is a good week as you improve significantly, and life goes back to normal.
- Weeks 3 and 4:** These are dull weeks, as you're OK, but still not quite there, and the rate of improvement has slowed down.
- Weeks 5 and 6:** More fun again as you should be starting to look good. You may still need some make-up to hide the scar, and your eyelashes will feel curiously numb.

3 months: The scar is now really starting to fade, and you should be forgetting you had surgery.

6 months: Your eyes will continue to improve all the way to 6 months.

Most important is to call or text me at any point if you are worried about anything!

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Ric Caesar