Amniotic Membrane Graft Surgery

The human amniotic membrane (AM) is the innermost layer of the placenta. The placenta is tissue that lines the uterus during pregnancy. Due to a number of its properties, AM is used often in the treatment of severe ocular surface diseases. AM is made from a fresh placenta under sterile conditions, and washed with a solution of antibiotics. Testing is done to make sure that each tissue is safe for use in humans. Amniotic membrane makes anti-inflammatory and growth factors that help treat the inflammatory diseases of the surface of the eye. AM is secured to the ocular surface by tissue glue, stitches or an overlying bandage soft contact lens. Most of the time, the procedure is done in the office setting with an anesthetic. After application of the amniotic membrane (AMT) on to the eye surface, AM will be slowly absorbed within 4-6 weeks. Since AM is not a completely transparent tissue, the patient’s visual acuity may decrease after AMT. The patient should be aware of this temporary effect before the procedure.

Getting Ready

Any surgery prescriptions that you will need will be faxed to your local pharmacy.

Caring for Yourself after Surgery

1. **Do not rub your eye or try to clean material from the eye.**
2. You may be asked to wear the metal eye shield at night and when napping to protect the eye. If you wear glasses, wear them during the day. If not, wear the metal shield. You need to wear the shield for one week. Wearing dark glasses may help the eye feel more comfortable.
3. Avoid strenuous activity and heavy lifting (over 20 pounds) until cleared by your doctor. Exercise (i.e. walking) will not harm the eye if done in moderation. Go slowly and do not strain the first week. Depth perception is impaired while wearing an eye patch. Be careful on stairs. Do not drive until cleared by your doctor. Sexual activities may be resumed as soon as you are comfortable.
4. You may have dull pain, aching, or a scratching feeling in your eye. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) for relief. If your pain is not controlled by these medicines, call your doctor.

5. Have your eye drop prescriptions filled and start using them either when you get home or the next day as you have been instructed.

6. You may shower or bathe as usual. Be careful not to get soap into your eyes.

7. Watching TV or reading will not harm the eye. You may do so if you wish.

Call your doctor right away if you have

- An increase in swelling or redness
- Any increase in pain or discharge from the eye
- A decrease in vision
- Nausea or vomiting

Phone Numbers

University Station Eye Clinic, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (608) 263-7171

When the clinic is closed, your call will be forwarded to the hospital paging operator. Ask for the “Eye Resident on Call”. Give the operator your name and phone number with area code. The doctor will call you back.

If you live out of the area, call 1-800-323-8942 and ask to be transferred to the above number.

Please call if you have any questions or concerns.