Care for Wound(s) Near the Eye or Eyelid

You have had surgery near your eye or eyelid. Special care and good cleaning of the wound and eye helps your wound to heal and prevents problems such as infection. This handout tells you how to care for your wound once you are home. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the phone number at the end of this handout.

Supplies You May Need to Buy:
- Clean cotton swabs (Q-tips®).
- 1 bottle of sterile saline for contact lens wearers (in a squirt type bottle).
- 1 tube Vaseline (white petroleum). This may be provided to you.
- Band-Aids®
- Telfa® pads and tape
- Sterile eye ointment (may be provided to you)

If your eye is covered with an eye patch, the nurse will instruct you in any special care.

When to Do Wound Care
Start your wound care on ___________________. Keep the dressing clean and dry until then. Clean your wound _____ times a day until it is healed.

Care of the Wound
1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Take off the old dressing. If it sticks, wet the dressing with water from the sink or in the shower.
3. Shower with the bandage off. Allow a gentle spray of water to cleanse the eye/wound for about 20 seconds. If you cannot shower, use sterile normal saline for soft contact lens wearers and squirt saline gently over wound, rinsing it daily. Normal saline can be bought at most drug or discount stores.
   Note: Gelfoam® may have been put on your wound to stop bleeding. The Gelfoam® will slowly come off as the wound is cleaned. Do not force it off. If some remains, it will fall off when ready.
4. Wash hands again with soap and water before touching your bandage supplies.
5. Apply Vaseline® (white petroleum) in a thin layer using a clean Q-tip®.
6. Cover with a Band-Aid® or Telfa® pad to soak up any drainage and protect the wound. As the drainage lessens, the wound may be left open to air. Be careful when you put the Telfa® dressing on the wound. Do not let the Telfa® dressing rub your eye.
7. Use sterile eye lubricating ointment if you cannot close your eyelid all the way.
Pain Control
- If your wound hurts, you may take Tylenol® (acetaminophen) by following the package directions. Limit use of over the counter acetaminophen if you are given a prescription that contains additional Tylenol® (acetaminophen). Do not take medicines that contain aspirin or ibuprofen while your wound is healing unless approved by your provider.
- If prescribed a narcotic pain medicine, please do not drink or drive while taking this medicine. It is best to take narcotics with food to prevent nausea/vomiting. Narcotics may also cause constipation. You may use over the counter stool softeners as needed.
- If you have a sudden increase in pain that is not relieved by pain medicines and ice compress, please call the clinic where you were seen (see numbers listed below). You may have bleeding under your skin and need treatment.
- Call us if you have any sharp pain or gritty feeling on your eyeball (feels as if something is in your eye), or a lot of tearing or redness of the eye.

Activities
- Do not do heavy activity for the first 2 days or as instructed.
- Do not lift more than 15 pounds until your doctor says it is ok.
- Do not drive if your eye is swollen covered, or you have any problems with your vision.
- No swimming or use of hot tubs until your wound is completely covered with skin.

Swelling and Bruising
This is fairly common, but goes away in 2 to 3 weeks.

Since your wound is on your face:
- Sleep with your head raised on 2 pillows to reduce swelling.
- Avoid bending with your head below heart level.
- Swelling around the eyes & neck is normal. Swelling will be worse in the morning and improve during the day. Expect that swelling may persist for 3 days or longer.

Apply ice or cold compress to prevent and reduce swelling if told to do so.
- Do not apply ice right on the skin.
- Ice should be placed in a plastic bag then wrapped in a towel and applied to the bandaged wound.
- Ice should be kept on for only 15 minutes at a time.

Bleeding
Do not use alcohol, aspirin, or medicines that contain aspirin while your wound is healing unless told to do so by your doctor. They may increase your risk of bleeding.
If there is bleeding, you should follow these steps:
1. Press firmly over the site for 10 minutes (timed by the clock). If the bleeding has not stopped, use pressure for 10 more minutes (timed by the clock).
2. If the bleeding still has not stopped, call the clinic where you were seen (see numbers listed below) or go to your local emergency room. Have someone else drive you.
3. You can reinforce the soiled bandage, but do not remove it. You could disturb the clot.
4. Keep your head elevated.
5. Use ice or cool compresses to slow the bleeding.

Infection
Infection is not common when the wound is well cared for. If you notice any signs of infection, please call the clinic.
- Fever greater than 101º F for two readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Increased pain or swelling of the wound.
- Pus or smelly wound drainage.
- Redness or spreading out from the wound.
- Warmth around the site.

Scarring
There is always some scarring in any surgical site. Time improves most scars. Cover-up makeup may be used after the wound has healed. Sunscreen should be used on scars after healing. Some people may develop very thick scars, or keloids, which may need extra medical care. Call the clinic if this occurs and we will schedule you a follow up visit.

Phone Numbers
If you have any questions or concerns, call the Dermatology/Mohs Clinic where you were seen weekdays between 8:00 am-4:30 pm. After clinic hours, holidays & weekends, the clinic number will be answered by the paging operator. Ask for the Dermatology or Mohs Surgery doctor on call. Leave your name and phone number with area code. The doctor will call you back.

UW East Mohs Clinic
5249 E. Terrace Drive/Madison, WI 53718
(608) 265-1288, press option 2

UW West Mohs Clinic
451 Junction Rd./Madison, WI 53717
(608) 263-6226