

Dr. Hawes' Frequently Asked Questions after or about Surgery

Is it supposed to be bleeding? Seepage of blood around the sutures is normal and expected on the day of surgery. Usually this stops after 2-3 days. Iced compresses and bed rest are helpful. Large amounts of bleeding, such as enough to soak a bath towel, are not normal. You should call Dr. Hawes (303-698-2424) if large amounts of bleeding occur, or if you are worried.

How much bruising will I have and for how long? Typically the bruising is obvious for 2 weeks after the surgery. If you bruise easily, it may last longer. Arnica Montana, commonly known as the Mountain Daisy, is a homeopathic medication available at vitamin stores which may help decrease bruising. You may start taking this (12c strength) on the day of your surgery and continue it until the bruising is gone. The tiny pills are placed under your tongue and will dissolve. Follow the instructions on the bottle.

My eye is red. Why? Blood often accumulates on the surface of the eye after surgery around the eye. This may look alarming, but will resolve in a week or two.

The skin around my eye is swollen, is this normal? Yes. Bruising and swelling is almost always present after surgery, and tends to improve in 2 weeks time. If your eye is swollen tightly shut, call Dr. Hawes.

My eye is swollen, is this normal? Swelling of the eye is common after surgery near the eye. This usually resolves in a week or two.

Why is my vision blurry? Bleeding, swelling, ointment, and tearing all contribute to some visual blurring for the first few days after surgery. Usually the vision clears up in a few days. The vision should never get completely black, however, and you should call Dr. Hawes if you are not able to even see light with your eye after surgery.

How long before double vision goes away? Sometimes a local anesthetic is given and this may cause double vision for several hours. Usually a patch is placed over the operated eye when this is done. If you had surgery to repair an orbital fracture or for thyroid related eye disease, double vision may last weeks to months.

I had eye surgery, but ear and neck glands are swollen. Is this normal? Blood and fluid drains away from the eye by going to the cheek and neck, so this type of swelling early after surgery usually is normal. It should resolve in 2 weeks.

My eye itches, is this normal? Itching is a sign of healing. However, allergy to medication can also cause itching. If the itching is especially bad, it could mean you are allergic to the ointment you are using.

Can I blow my nose after a DCR or tubes? No. This can cause bleeding from your nose. After a week or two, blowing your nose is allowed, though you should not pinch your nose closed when blowing, as this could cause the tube to come out.

When can I take a shower? The first day after the operation. Keep your eyes closed while washing your hair.

When can I exercise? You should wait two weeks after surgery before doing vigorous exercise. Lifting weights is especially dangerous, as the strain may cause bleeding. You can do light exercise, such as going for a walk, after one week.

Can I go swimming? Two weeks after surgery.

Can I drive? You cannot drive yourself home from the surgery, or for 24 hours after the operation. Most people are able to drive in a few days, as soon as their vision clears.

Can I wear makeup? No makeup is allowed on the sutures. These are usually removed or dissolved in one week. You can wear makeup sooner in areas away from the sutures.

Can I lift? You can lift objects that do not require straining. After 2 weeks, there are no restrictions on lifting.

Can I vacuum? Yes, after a few days.

When can I travel? You can travel as soon as the first day after surgery, although it will help to have a driver. Air travel is also fine after the first day. If you are planning a vacation, give yourself a week or two for the swelling to go down before departure.

Can I work? It depends on your work and the operation you had done. Most people can return to work within a week. Some are determined to return as soon as possible and start working the next day. Others take longer or don't wish to work while bruised and may take 2 weeks off work. If you are having problems such as double vision, it could take weeks or months before you can work again.

How long will stitches be in? One week on average, although some last less than this and others may take 6 weeks to dissolve.

Will my eye be patched? Possibly. If so, the patch will probably be left in place for a few days. Dr. Hawes avoids patching both eyes, so you will be able to see some immediately after the operation with at least one eye.

How long do tubes stay in? 2-3 months in most cases, sometimes up to a year.

How long will I be at the hospital for a day surgery? Usually about half the day.

Do I have to stay overnight in the hospital? No. Exceptions would be severe illness, pain, surgery late in the day, or serious medical problems.

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