

## VITRECTOMY SURGERY- Dr KL Lee

### Post-operative Information and Instructions

Vitrectomy surgery is performed for many different problems; therefore the recovery varies with each individual.

The surgeon may place a gas bubble or oil inside the eye which gently places pressure on the retina to assist with healing. This may require the patient to place their head in a position which will ensure the bubble is correctly positioned.

This is referred to as "*post-operative positioning*".



*When a bubble of gas, air or oil has been injected into the eye it will keep the retina in place after the surgery when the bubble floats up and supports the retina from inside the eye. If you are positioning face down, it is not unusual for the eyelids to become very swollen and may take several weeks for the eyelids to return to normal.*

### **What will my eye look like after surgery?**

It is normal for the eye to look very red, for the eyelids to become swollen, and the eye to be very watery after this surgery.

When the eyelids are swollen, they will often become stuck together by the morning. You can clean the eye in the morning before putting in the eye drops. Use water which you have boiled and cooled to room temperature, or you may prefer to purchase a sterile saline solution from your chemist.

- Moisten a clean tissue with some water or saline.
- With the eye closed, starting near the nose gently wipe along the eyelashes.
- Discard this tissue and repeat until the eye is clean and comfortable.
- Do not attempt to clean inside the eyelids.

## Post-Operative Positioning Following Surgery

### Why do I have to position?

During vitrectomy surgery gas, air or oil may be injected into the eye to maintain the retina in the correct place during the healing process. If this is part of your post-operative care, your surgeon will discuss with you how you will need to position (sit/lie) to ensure the bubble is supporting the retina to promote healing.

### How do I maintain the correct position?

If you are required to position face down, you can maintain the position by lying on the bed with pillows for support.

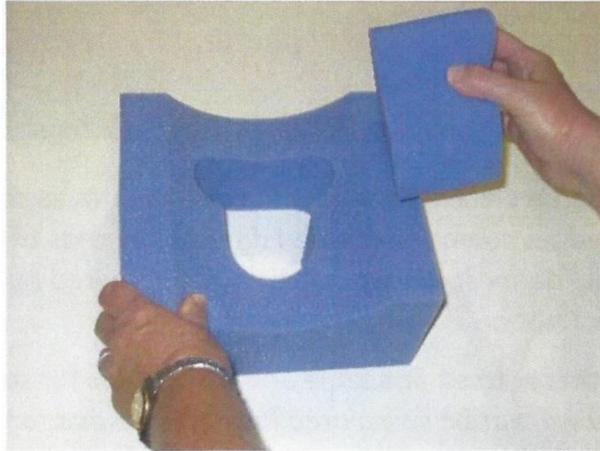


Pillows should be placed under the hips and ankles as shown above or special wedges can be purchased if longer periods of positioning are required. Foam can be cut to any shape required by companies such as Clark Rubber. You may prefer to sit at a table and use pillows for support. This way you will not be so isolated from friends and family.

Equipment has been specially designed for patients who require post-operative positioning following vitrectomy surgery. The hospital staff can provide you with information regarding hiring of this equipment, but it is not essential for your recovery.



If your surgeon requires you to position face down following your surgery the hospital will provide you with a small foam pillow shaped to support your face during this time.



## **FAQs**

### **What should I do following surgery?**

Following surgery, you will be given eye drops to use for up to 4 weeks to help the eye settle. The operation does not usually require staying in hospital longer than 1 night and patients are normally reviewed at Eye Specialists the following day. You may be required to position your head in a certain way for a number of days.

### **How much time off work will I need?**

Most people will need at least two weeks off work after surgery. The amount of time off work will depend on the kind of work you do and the kind of surgery done. This will need to be discussed with your surgeon.

### **Will my eye be sore following surgery?**

It is normal to experience some discomfort in the eye after surgery but this usually is relieved with simple painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.

### **How soon will I see after surgery?**

Vision in the operated eye will usually be very blurred for the first few weeks but will slowly improve. The final visual result may take several weeks or months and you may require new glasses. Your surgeon will discuss with you the expected final outcome of your vision.

### **How long before I can wash my hair?**

You are able to wash your hair as required as long as you DO NOT let any water or

shampoo/conditioner run down your face and into the eyes. To prevent this from happening; face away from the water stream, keep your head tilted back and eyes closed whilst rinsing.

**When can I wear make-up again following surgery?**

No eye make-up for 2 weeks following surgery. Make-up **away from the eye** such as foundation is ok to wear.

**How soon can I ride in an airplane or be at high altitude?**

Never fly in a plane if gas is still present. It is very important to take care if planning car travel which may involve being at high altitude eg crossing a mountain range. Please consult your doctor if unsure.

**Should the drops sting?**

Ideally no, but they often do especially if you have very dry eye. The drops will sting momentarily after you put them in the eye.

**If I am using other drops such as lubricating or anti-glaucoma drops, will it interfere with the post-operative drops?**

No. If your doctor has prescribed other drops prior to your procedure, you should continue using them unless otherwise advised.

**Please contact Dr KL Lee if you have any questions:**

<b>Maitland Eye Centre</b> <b>02 4933 5755</b>	<b>Singleton Eye Centre</b> <b>02 6572 2522</b>	<b>Raymond Terrace</b> <b>02 4929 5969</b>
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