



INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING MACULAR HOLE SURGERY

What is required after the operation?

The eye is covered overnight with a pad and a plastic shield. This should be removed and discarded the next morning. However if cataract surgery has been carried out simultaneously the shield needs to be kept and worn overnight for the next 5 nights to protect the eye whilst sleeping.

The vision is expected to be poor immediately following the operation, as an intraocular gas bubble is present and this severely impairs vision

Drops are required for about 4 weeks. Usually these are Maxidex (Dexamethasone and Neomycin) or Tobradex (Tobramycin and Dexamethasone). These are used 4 times a day for 2 weeks then reduced to 2 times a day for a further two weeks.

You are advised to posture face down for 5 days in order that the gas bubble holds the macular hole closed. Thus, you should plan to relax at home in order to do this, and not plan to work. It is best to adopt this position for 25 minutes in every half hour, then take a 5 minute break. You can take longer breaks for meals, taking a shower or bath, etc.

The shadow due to the gas bubble will seem to descend progressively in your vision over the following weeks as the gas absorbs. Usually some vision over the top of the shadow returns after 1 to 2 weeks, depending on the gas used.

You should not fly in an aircraft or travel in mountainous terrain until the gas bubble completely disappears. This is to prevent the gas from expanding at altitude and increasing the intraocular pressure, with potentially blinding consequences. You will know when the gas bubble has disappeared when you no longer see its shadow on looking vertically downwards.

In the unlikely event that you require an urgent anaesthetic for any reason after the operation whilst there is still some gas in the eye, you or your relatives should inform the Anaesthetist of the recent retinal surgery.

You should not rub the eye. You may take a shower and wash your hair normally, but try to avoid getting water in your eyes.

Any discharge on the eyelids can be cleaned gently with some cotton-wool moistened with warm water.

You should avoid swimming for about 2 weeks

You may find the gas bubble distracting to the vision in the other eye, and therefore you are advised not to drive until the gas bubble clears.

What follow-up is required?

Usually a post-operative appointment is arranged for about 2 weeks, 6 weeks and 3 months post-operatively. The vision may continue to improve for up to one year after the surgery so do not be disappointed if the vision is not good initially. Some distortion may persist.