

BEFORE PTERYGIUM SURGERY

A. Your regular medications:

1. Blood-thinning (anticoagulant) medication:

Our general advice for your blood-thinning medication is to continue them unless advised to stop.

If Dr Then wishes to stop your blood-thinning medication, she will write directly to your GP/Specialist for confirmation as to whether it is safe for you to stop (or reduce) these medications before your surgery, and we will then advise you of their instructions.

In some cases, we may also ask your GP/Specialist to provide medical clearance for your surgery. If you have had recent heart surgery or a stroke, then it may not be safe for you to have surgery within 6-12 months of the event.

Please DO NOT stop your blood thinning medication on your own, without first seeking the advice of your GP/specialist or our rooms.

If you have experienced a serious medical episode since your consultation with Dr Then, please advise our office.

The anaesthetist for your surgery will also discuss your blood thinning medication with you before your surgery.

2. Diabetic/Weight loss medications (GLP-1 and GLP-1/GIP drugs: Ozempic/Wegovy, Mounjaro, Trulicity, Victoza, Saxenda)

You will be required to undertake a **Clear fluid diet for 24 hrs prior to the procedure**, with 6 hours fast pre-procedure.

The anaesthetist for your surgery will also advise what to do with diabetic medication prior to, and on the day of surgery.

3. All other medication:

All other medications should generally be taken up until the night of surgery unless advised otherwise by your GP/Specialist, or your anaesthetist.

B. Contact lenses:

If you wear contact lenses, you need to cease wear ONE (1) DAY BEFORE pterygium surgery

C. Fasting before surgery:

You will need to fast a minimum of 6 hours prior to surgery.

- For patients having their surgery in the morning, you may have a light snack BEFORE MIDNIGHT the night before your surgery, then water ONLY until 6.00am and NOTHING ELSE TO EAT OR DRINK UNTIL AFTER SURGERY IS COMPLETED unless otherwise advised by your anaesthetist.
- For patients having their surgery in the afternoon, you may have a light snack BEFORE 7am the morning of your surgery, then water ONLY until 10.30am and NOTHING ELSE TO EAT OR DRINK UNTIL AFTER SURGERY IS COMPLETED unless otherwise advised by your anaesthetist.
- Diabetic patients will be given specific instructions regarding this.

ON THE DAY OF SURGERY

1. Dressing for surgery:

Please wear comfortable clothes on the day of surgery.

Please do not wear any make-up (particularly mascara or eye-liner) or face lotions/creams on the day of surgery

2. Before the operation:

You will be admitted into hospital at least 1 hour before your surgery is scheduled. This time is required to prepare you for the surgery.

As the order in which patients are operated on may change at short notice on the day, you will not be given a specific time at which your operation will occur. Admission time may be subject to change and if this is necessary, patients will be contacted by the theatre reception, if not by Peel Vision.

Dr Then would have already discussed the type of anaesthetic that you will be receiving during the operation. Most patients will have a local anaesthetic consisting of eye drops, along with a light sedative ("twilight sedation") to relax them. A small proportion of patients will require a general anaesthetic.

3. During the operation:

During the operation, you will be lying on a comfortable flat bed. Your face will be washed by Dr Then and will then be draped with a light paper-cover. This drape sits above the face and does not cover the nose or mouth. There will be an oxygen tube under the drape which keeps fresh air on your face at all times. If you suffer with claustrophobia, let Dr Then know and she will arrange to make the draping as comfortable as possible for you.

During the operation, your eye will be kept open with a comfortable speculum, so that you do not have to worry about keeping your eye open yourself. All that you will see during the operation are lights and colours. All that you need to do during the operation is keep your face and body still.

4. After the operation:

The operation itself generally takes about 20 minutes. After the operation, Dr Then will place an eye pad and shield on your eye (or clear shield only if vision is limited in opposite eye, to ensure you still have some vision). You will then be sent back to the ward to recover and rest, and you will be offered something to eat and drink.

Overall, you should expect to be in the hospital for the half-day. For morning surgery patients, you should be home before midday. For afternoon surgery patients, you should be home before 6pm.

You will be discharged home with any applicable eye pad and shield over your operated eye and will also be given a bag containing 2 bottles of medicated eye drops.

5. Transport on the day of surgery:

Please arrange a driver to bring you to and from the hospital on the day of surgery. If taking a taxi home, you must be accompanied by a friend or family member. Your driver will be contacted with a time to pick you up, after your surgery has been completed.

6. Support at home on the first day of surgery:

It is mandatory that you have a carer stay with you on the first night after surgery. This is a requirement to meet anaesthetic guidelines as the sedative medication used during your surgery can affect you for up to 24 hours after surgery. This carer may be your spouse, relative or friend.

Please note that your surgery will not be booked, and may also be cancelled on the day, if you have not arranged this carer.

7. Eye makeup:

It is recommended that no eye makeup be worn for at least 2 weeks after surgery, to limit the risk of infection.

AFTER PTERYGIUM SURGERY

The eye pad and/or shield is to be kept on overnight. If your post-operative appointment is the following day, we will remove the eye pad/shield. If not, you will be asked to remove the eye pad/shield yourself when you wake up the following morning. You will then begin instilling your prescribed eye drops.

The clear shield should be kept. If you sleep on your side or feel that you may accidentally rub your eye whilst sleeping, then you should tape this shield over your eye at night for the first week after surgery.

You will be reviewed within the first few days after surgery by Dr Then or her Assistant.

You will be given instructions on how to use your 2 bottles of eye drops. These eye drops prevent infection and aid in the healing of the eye after surgery. They are:

1. Chlorsig (Chloromycetin) – to be used for 28 days after surgery
2. Prednefrin Forte – to be used for 28 days after surgery

Follow-up appointments after pterygium surgery

You will be reviewed by Dr Then or her Assistant after surgery at your given postoperative appointment time.

Your final review will be 4 weeks after pterygium surgery. At this visit, Dr Then will ensure that your eye has completely healed, that your eye is comfortable and that you are satisfied with your vision.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER PTERYGIUM SURGERY

1. Pain & discomfort

There is often significant pain and discomfort in your eye for the first night and first week following surgery. This is because your eye will have a corneal abrasion on it from where the pterygium has been removed and will also have some self-dissolving sutures in it where the graft has been placed.

We generally recommend managing the pain with simple pain-killers such as paracetamol, codeine, or Nurofen. You may also be provided with stronger pain-killers by the anaesthetist to be taken on the first night after surgery. Most patients report that the pain subsides considerably after the first week.

2. Recovery of vision

As the eye will be mildly inflamed and swollen after surgery, your vision will take a few days to recover and improve. This means that it will be blurry for at least the first few days after surgery. As everyone is different, some patients may notice rapid improvement in their vision in the first few days, whilst others may take a bit longer. Overall, the vision usually takes about 4 weeks to stabilise.

Gritty Eye

Most patients will experience a gritty/ itchy/ foreign body sensation in the eye for the first few weeks after surgery. This is entirely normal and is due to multiple factors. Initially the small incisions made on the eye will cause this sensation until they heal, usually within 48 hours. After this, the tear film is slightly unstable and leads to a more rapid drying-out of the eye for the first few weeks. This is especially if you already have dry eyes prior to surgery. Dr Then advises to treat these symptoms with an artificial tear eye drop, available at any pharmacy, to be used at least 4 times daily for the first 4 weeks – or longer if required.

Glare / light sensitivity

This will vary between patients. It is recommended that you wear protective eyewear (sunglasses) for comfort if needed.

WHAT YOU CAN DO AFTER PTERYGIUM SURGERY

1. When can I drive?

You are **NOT** allowed to drive in the first 24 hours after surgery, as your sedative is still wearing off.

We recommend commencing driving **no earlier than 3 days after surgery**, as it usually takes this time for your vision to clear. **DO NOT DRIVE** if vision is **NOT** clear

2. When can I resume exercise?

- Light exercise can be resumed when your eye is comfortable, usually within a few days.
- Heavy lifting and bending should be minimised in the first few days then can be resumed normally
- Weight lifting may be resumed 1 week after surgery.
- Yoga/ Pilates may be resumed 1 week after surgery.
- Contact sports or sports where injury is possible (tennis, golf, football, cricket) should not be resumed for at least 2 weeks after surgery.
- Swimming may be resumed 4 weeks after surgery.

3. When can I return to work?

This will depend on the type of work that you do and how quickly your vision recovers after surgery. Dr Then will generally advise 3-7 days off work after pterygium surgery. If your job is likely to expose you to significant dirt or dust, then you may want to take longer off work.

If your job requires you to drive or operate heavy machinery, then you may also require longer off work. Dr Then will discuss this with you as required.

4. When can I fly?

Short distance flights are generally safe after eye surgery if you absolutely must. We would recommend you have a check-up before you fly to ensure the graft site is satisfactory and to receive any instructions necessary whilst you are away.

5. When can I wear make-up?

Make-up around the eyes can be resumed 2 weeks after surgery

6. When can I commence wearing contact lenses?

Contact lens wear may generally be resumed 4-6 weeks after surgery, but should be discussed with Dr Then at your final postoperative appointment

7. Showering can be resumed the day after surgery, though try and avoid strong bursts of tap water or shampoo into the eye in the first few days

8. Normal diet and alcohol consumption can be resumed that day after surgery.

WHAT YOU CAN'T DO AFTER PTERYGIUM SURGERY

1. **NO SWIMMING** for 4 weeks after surgery

2. Any activity that will put your eye at risk of infection or injury - Common sense prevails!