

Glaucoma

What is glaucoma surgery?

Glaucoma surgery is done to make a new drainage system for the fluid of the eye to leave.

Before surgery

You cannot drive after surgery so make arrangements for someone to pick you up after surgery and stay with you for the night. If you do not have a ride home your surgery may be cancelled.

The day of surgery

Leave all jewellery and valuables at home. Bring only your health card and medication.

You need to come at your assigned appointment time. It takes 1½ hours to get your eye ready for surgery. A special drop needs to be put in your eye.

Wear a comfortable top and pants. When you get ready for surgery, you remove your top only and keep your pants and socks on.

What happens next?

Your nurse puts a special drop in your eye. Your nurse then puts a thin tube into a vein in your arm. This is called an intravenous (IV) and is used to give you fluids and sedation in the operating room.

The surgeon comes to see you and puts his or her initials near the eye having the operation with a special pen.

You are then taken to the operating room. The surgical team greets you and checks your name and eye being done. This is called the 'surgical pause'.

Surgery is done using local anaesthetic. This means only your eye is frozen. You will feel pressure during the procedure. You are given pain medication when needed. You may have an eye patch put on.

The operation takes about 1 hour.

How will I feel after surgery?

Your eye may be red and tender to touch. You may have some discomfort. Your eye may feel gritty or like there is sand in it. Your eye may have a burning feeling. You may get a headache. These feelings are normal. For pain or discomfort, you may have pain medication, such as Tylenol® or other medication ordered by your surgeon.

If the pain is severe after you go home, call your surgeon or go to the nearest Emergency.

When can I eat after surgery?

Eat a light snack or meal when you go home. You can then follow your usual diet. You cannot drink beer, wine or alcohol for 24 hours.

When do I go home?

Most people go home about 20 minutes after surgery.

When you come back from the operating room, your nurse monitors your blood pressure, heart, and oxygen for 10 minutes. You will have a drink and the IV tube is taken out of your arm. The nurse reviews the after surgery instructions with you and your care helper.

For your safety, your nurse helps you get up the first time after surgery. You then get dressed and use the washroom. A volunteer then takes you in a wheelchair to the front door for pick-up by your support person.

What activities can I do at home?

You may read or watch TV in moderation. You may find your vision blurry at first. You may have a bath or a shower. Avoid getting soapy water in your eye. Do not wash your hair for 1 week.

Talk to your surgeon about bending and lifting. Most surgeons do not want you to bend or lift for 2 to 6 weeks after surgery. **Follow your surgeon's instructions.** Generally, after 1 week, you may do light housework. Do not lift anything over 15 pounds or 7 kilograms. Avoid bending as much as you can.

You may need to wear an eye patch. If you do, follow your surgeon's instructions about when to wear it.

Follow any instructions your surgeon gives you about using eye drops or ointment. Wear your glasses or sunglasses when outside during the day to protect your eye.

Wear your eye shield at night if you are using one. Put one strip of tape on the eye shield before you put it over the eye. Put the eye shield in place and add a second piece of tape to hold it in place.

Do not drive for 24 hours then follow your doctor's instructions about driving.

If you do not have special instructions, follow the steps on the next page to use drops or ointment.

Putting eye drops in:

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Read the label to check that you have the right medication.
3. Sit or lie down and tilt your head back at least 45 degrees.
4. Gently pull down the lower lid of your eye with one hand. This makes a small “pocket” between your eyelid and eyeball.
5. Hold the eye drop bottle with your other hand and rest your hand against your cheek bone.
6. Look up towards the top of your head and put a drop in the pocket formed between your eyelid and eyeball. Do not wipe your eyes.
 - Avoid touching your eye with the tip of the bottle. Do not hold the bottle too high or the drop will splash and you will not get all of the medication in your eye.
 - If you have trouble putting in the eye drops, ask a family member or friend to help you.
 - You may wish to buy a drop aid from the drugstore. They can show you how to use it when you buy one.

Putting eye ointment in:

1. Wash and dry your hands.
2. Warm the tube of ointment in your hand. Do not store ointment in the refrigerator.
3. Pull down your lower lid to make a small pocket between the lower lid and your eyeball.
4. Gently put about ½ inch of medication in this pocket.
 - Avoid touching your eye with the tip of the tube.
 - Eye ointment can make your vision blurry. Wait until you can see clearly before you start any activity.

When do I see the surgeon again?

You will be given an appointment to see your surgeon after surgery. It is important to keep this appointment so your surgeon can check your eye.

Bring all your eye medications and any forms you need filled out with you to this appointment.

When will I get new glasses?

Your surgeon will tell you when you will get a new prescription for glasses.