

Eye Muscle Surgery

“So...my child needs to have an eye muscle surgery. What now?”

Six muscles control the movement of each eye. If any of these muscles are too weak or tight, your surgeon may recommend eye muscle surgery to either strengthen or weaken the muscles to achieve better depth perception.

Your child must have a history and physical (also called an H&P) within 30 days of the procedure. Your surgeon will not want your child to swim for 24 hours prior to surgery.

“What will my child experience immediately following the surgery?”

Along with the routine postoperative care already covered in your booklet, eye muscle surgery patients may experience the following:

- **Discomfort:** This is usually minimal. Medication may be prescribed to help alleviate discomfort.
- **Vision/Eyes:** Your child's vision may appear blurred and will return to normal in a few days. The eye(s) will be reddened and tears may appear to be bloody for a few days after surgery.
- **Nausea:** Some patients experience nausea after this procedure. Should this occur, the surgeon may prescribe a medication to help alleviate the symptoms.
- **Fussiness:** Some children, especially infants, return to their room fussy and difficult to console. This fussiness is usually due to the “funny feeling” coming out of anesthesia rather than pain from the procedure.

“Is there any special care once the surgery is complete?”

Blood-tinged drainage may be gently wiped away with a tissue. The eye muscle surgery usually lasts approximately one hour for both the surgery and the time spent in the recovery room. After returning to you in the patient room, the child is typically discharged within two hours. The nurse will want to ensure that your child can drink fluids without any difficulty or nausea and that pain is under control. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be a part of their child's care during this time.

You will receive a copy of written discharge instructions that will go over home care to reference once you are home. A follow-up appointment will be made prior to discharge as well. The patient should be able to return to school/day care/work between one and three days.

“Anything else I should watch for?”

- **It is important that no soap or shampoo get in your child's eyes for one week.** You may need two people to assist with washing your child's hair to keep shampoo out of the eyes.
- No playing with any cats or dogs for two weeks because an animal may accidentally scratch your child's eyes.
- No playing with sand, no fighting, or any other activity that may injure the eye.
- No swimming due to the chlorine until approved by your surgeon.
- Stay away from anyone who has drainage from the eyes for at least two weeks.