

# Tear Duct Irrigation and Probing

## “So...my child has blocked tear ducts. What now?”

Babies are sometimes born with blocked tear ducts which appear a few weeks after birth. A way to clear the ducts is through a routine procedure called Probing and Irrigation of the tear duct.

*Irrigation* is injecting fluid through the lower and upper openings where it will normally flow into the tear sac and down through the duct into the nose.

*Probing* is passing a metal probe through the lower and upper openings into the tear sac and down the duct into the nose.

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

Along with the routine postoperative care already covered in your booklet, patients can expect the following:

- **Medication:** Medication may be prescribed to help alleviate discomfort.
- **Blurry vision:** Normal vision will return in a few hours.
- **Bloody tears:** Your child may have bloody tears for a few days after surgery.
- **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 tears may be gently wiped away with a tissue from the corner of the eye. The procedure of probing and irrigation of the tear ducts usually lasts less than 40 minutes 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 45 minutes. The nurse will want to ensure that your child can drink fluids without any difficulty or nausea. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be a part of their child's care during this time. Your child will be encouraged to drink fluids for the first 24 hours and can resume a regular diet upon returning home. 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.

## “Anything else I should watch for?”

You should contact your surgeon if your child experiences any of the following:

- Fever of 101.5° F or greater
- Pain that gets worse despite using pain medication
- Any loss of vision or any changes in vision