

Postoperative Instructions

1. Do not rub your eyes! This is especially important for patients who have PRK and LASIK, but it applies to those who have SMILE and PCRI as well. Do not rub your eyes for two months or until your doctor says it's safe.
2. Avoid squeezing your eyelids tightly together. Rather, close them gently and blink normally.
3. Wear the sunglasses provided in the postoperative kit when you leave the Laser Refractive Center.
4. Do not drive a car the day of surgery. You may resume driving the following day if you feel your vision is sufficiently improved to do so safely.
5. Do not plan any significant activities immediately after the procedure. Go home. Get into a relatively dark room. Rest or sleep for the next five to six hours, keeping your eyes closed gently during this time.
6. Pain or discomfort varies considerably following refractive surgery. Light sensitivity varies from person to person as well, and most patients experience redness and tearing for the first 24 hours. Take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or Tylenol as needed to manage any eye discomfort or pain that you experience.
7. If a bandage contact lens was placed in either eye, leave it alone until your doctor removes it. If it falls or blinks out, simply leave it out. If your pain level increases substantially as a result, inform your doctor.
8. Instill the antibiotic and anti-inflammatory eye drops prescribed by your doctor four times a day for one week. Shake the anti-inflammatory medication. An easy routine to follow is to instill the drops at breakfast, lunch, dinner, and bedtime. Instill the two medications five minutes apart. The order is not important. Only one drop needs to land in your eye. If you miss your eye, do it again. You can't overdo it. The drops will sting or burn the first day or two that you use them. If you want to increase the chances of landing the drops in your eye on the first attempt, lie flat and pull your lower lid down before you instill them.
9. Wear the protective goggles provided in the postoperative kit whenever you nap or sleep during the first 24 hours. You may wear them up to one week if you like.
10. Avoid showering and getting water into your eyes for the next 24 hours. After that, it will be safe to shower but you should keep your eyes closed and the water out. While it is inevitable that some water will get in through your closed eyelids, try to limit the amount. When you go to dry yourself with a towel, wipe or press around the bony part of the eye socket as much as you like, but don't press on the eye itself. Try to keep water out of your eyes for one week.
11. Do not swim with your eyes open under water for the first two weeks following the procedure.
12. You may return to work or school the following day if your vision and comfort level allow.

13. Do not wear any eye makeup for the first two weeks following the procedure. Thereafter, take care to avoid side-to-side rubbing over the corneas when removing makeup.
14. Expect your vision to fluctuate for the first month or more following the procedure. Often there will be halos around lights at night and your vision may fluctuate over the course of the day. Your eyes may also feel dry for up to three or four months. All of this is normal. If the dryness is bothersome, instill over-the-counter artificial tears in between the medication eye drops. Once you finish the medication eye drops, you can instill artificial tears anytime you have dryness symptoms.
15. Your doctor's office will arrange follow up visits to remove any contact lenses that were placed and perform postoperative refraction measurements.
16. If you have a restriction on your driver's license that requires you to wear optical correction when driving, be sure to visit the Department of Motor Vehicles and have the restriction removed once your vision is stable.
17. These postoperative instructions are generic. Contact your doctor's office for any additional instructions or exceptions to these instructions.