



ADVICE TO PATIENTS LEAVING HOSPITAL AFTER CORNEAL GRAFT SURGERY

What is a cornea?

Your cornea is the clear transparent window at the front of the eye. The cornea transmits light and helps to focus visual images.

Why do you need a corneal graft?

A corneal transplant (or graft) can restore vision and prevent eye pain. Corneal blindness may occur through injury, infection or congenital diseases. A corneal transplant is also sometimes used to prevent pain in patients who have recurrent blisters on their cornea.

What is a corneal graft?

During a corneal transplant, your damaged cornea is replaced by an identical sized piece of healthy cornea from an eye donated to the eye bank. Corneal transplantation is the most frequent human transplant conducted by hospitals.

Healing after a corneal graft

- It will be several months before your vision becomes stable, but individual cases will vary.
- Before healing has taken place the stitches in the corneal graft may cause discomfort (mild pain or minor irritation), but this will become more comfortable over the first few days after your surgery.
- Judging distances may be difficult due to the changes of vision in the operated eye. Be careful on stairs, walking outside and when pouring hot liquids.
- Avoid eye infections by protecting the newly grafted eye from contamination. This includes wearing glasses or sunglasses when outside, wearing a plastic eye shield at night, not rubbing your eye and not allowing tap water to splash into the operated eye.
- If you run out of drops before your next appointment, please obtain a prescription from your doctor to continue with your eye treatment.

Eye Pain

If you experience severe pain or if your pain relief medication does not relieve the eye discomfort (mild pain or minor irritation), you must notify your eye doctor or hospital staff. Severe pain may indicate an infection in your eye. This condition is serious and will require medical attention.

Precautions after corneal grafts

- When returning to full sporting activity, it is important to remember that the grafted eye must be protected. Consider the use of protective goggles/glasses for future sporting activities. You must avoid contact sports (eg rugby, boxing), and avoid swimming for a few months.
- Corneal graft rejection can occur at any time in your life. If you experience deterioration in your vision you must contact your doctor or hospital staff immediately.

It is important that you attend your follow-up appointments on a regular basis.