

Patient information

Collagen cross-linking after-care instructions

After collagen cross-linking, you have a soft 'bandage' contact lens in place for seven days. You have been given several different drops and painkilling tablets. It is important to keep your eyes lubricated with your eye drops to allow the surface of the eye to recover during the weeks after surgery. Please only instil one drop at a time.

After surgery

To keep the corneal surface (epithelium) well lubricated, it is important to use the drops hourly on the first day. You do not need to use the drops during the night.

Do not rub your eye(s) after the procedure whilst the contact lens is in place. If you accidentally do so and the contact lens comes out, do not put it back in your eye. If you are concerned, please call our advice line on 0207 566 2345 or clinic 4 on 020 7566 2475. A&E is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You have been given an additional eye drop for use as a painkiller, which should be used sparingly. This drop is called Proxymetacaine and is an anaesthetic eye drop.

Your vision in the first week will vary quite a bit, and you may be sensitive to light as a result of the procedure, so it is recommended that you do not plan too many activities during this period. After three or four days your vision should begin to slowly improve.

Discomfort in the eyes is normal for the first week, and we have provided you with all the eye drops you will need to minimise this discomfort. Your eye(s) may be painful at times, mainly in the first three days. After this, the sensation tends to be that of irritation and grittiness.

If you develop increasing pain and redness please contact the department or attend A&E.

This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print on request. Please call PALS: 020 7566 2324/ 020 7566 2325



Helpful ways of preventing the discomfort include taking oral analgesics: two paracetamol tablets every four hours, (maximum eight per day), plus oral Naproxen (250mg) twice a day or Ibuprofen 200mg three times per day for the first three days. It also helps to keep your eye drops in the fridge and to use ice packs or cool compresses over closed eyes, which soothes any discomfort or eyelid swelling.

If you have a history of cold sore infections in the eye (herpes simplex keratitis/ulcers), please let the doctor know on the day of the procedure. You will be provided with an extra anti-viral tablet (acyclovir) to take afterwards.

We suggest following the order that the drops are listed:

Day of surgery (day 0)

Name of medication	Action of medication	Frequency of medication	Additional comments
Dexamethasone	Anti-inflammatory	1 drop every hour	Stings a little
Moxifloxacin	Antibiotic	1 drop 4 times a day	
Hyabak	Tear supplement	1 drop every hour	Comfort drop
Proxymetacaine	Anaesthetic drop	1 drop when required	

Day 1 to Day 3

Name of medication	Action of medication	Frequency of medication	Additional comments
Dexamethasone	Anti-inflammatory	1 drop every hour	Stings a little
Moxifloxacin	Antibiotic	1 drop 4 times a day	
Hyabak	Tear supplement	1 drop every hour	Comfort drop
Proxymetacaine	Anaesthetic drop	1 drop when required	



Day 4 to Day 7

Name of medication	Action of medication	Frequency of medication	Additional comments
Dexamethasone	Anti-inflammatory	1 drop every 2 hours	Stings a little
Moxifloxacin	Antibiotic	1 drop 4 times a day	
Hyabak	Tear supplement	1 drop every 2 hours	Comfort drop

Week 2

Name of medication	Action of medication	Frequency of medication	Additional comments
Dexamethasone	Anti-inflammatory	1 drop 4 times a day	Stings a little
Hyabak	Tear supplement	1 drop 4 times a day	Comfort drop

Oral analgesia

Take Naproxen (250mg) twice a day (or Ibuprofen 200mg three times a day) for the first three days. You can also purchase paracetamol to use alongside this, taking two tablets up to four times a day. We advise against taking Naproxen or Nurofen if you have an aspirin allergy, are asthmatic or have a history of stomach ulcers as these painkillers can cause indigestion-like symptoms. If this occurs, please discontinue use.

Weeks 3 and 4

Discard any remaining preservative-free drops and start using the following:

FML 0.1% eye drops: Use one drop four times a day for two weeks

Hyabak: Use one drop four times a day as required

Advice points for after surgery

- It is normal for your sight to be blurred for the first few weeks after surgery. Using lots of Hyabak will help smooth the surface of the cornea and improve the focusing. You can use as much Hyabak as you wish – the more you use within the first few weeks, the quicker your vision will recover.
- Your vision is likely to vary for several months following the procedure. This is completely normal. Vision can also be affected by changes in light conditions,





- For the first week, please avoid more strenuous exercise such as running and aerobics (in case of injury or sweat running into the eyes).
- Although you may shower or bath the evening following surgery, it is recommended to avoid getting water in your eyes until you have been checked at your one-week follow up appointment. For the first month you should also not swim in chlorinated water. Other non-contact sports can be resumed after the first week.
- We also advise that you do not take any long-haul flights within the first week. Please contact the booking centre if you are planning any flights within seven days of surgery.
- Driving may be resumed after vision meets the driving standard (please seek individual advice).
- Avoid dusty/smoky environments for the first two weeks. If you get dust, dirt or an eyelash in your eye, wash it out using any of your eye drops.

The weeks after cross-linking

If you run out of artificial teardrops (Hyabak), you can purchase it over the counter at any pharmacy. When drops are needed up to six times per day, a normal bottle can be used. When drops are needed more than six times per day, use preservative-free minims. This will reduce toxicity from preservatives in bottled drops. Recommended artificial tear drops after cross-linking are:

Hyabak	(preservative free) watery, medium acting
Thealoz Duo	(preservative free) watery, medium/long acting
Refresh	(preservative free) watery, short acting
Liquifilm	(preserved or preservative free), watery, short acting
Celluvisc	(preservative free, single use vials), long acting gel
Systane	(available from Boots chemist), medium length action
Hylotears	(preservative free), medium length action
Viscotears gel	(preserved or preservative free), a good long acting gel for use at bedtime
Hylotears	(preservative free), medium length action

For further information about how to use your eye drops, please visit our YouTube channel.





Contact numbers

Nurse advice line: 020 7566 2345

Sarah Carmichael (booking centre): 020 7566 2205 (Monday to Friday 9pm – 4pm)

Corneal nurses: 020 7566 2404

For any concerns out-of-hours, please call A&E (open 24 hours)

Moorfields switchboard (out of hours) 020 7253 3411

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Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS

Foundation Trust

City Road, London EC1V 2PD

Phone: 020 7253 3411

www.moorfields.nhs.uk

Moorfields Direct telephone helpline

Phone: 020 7566 2345

Monday-Friday, 8.30am-9pm

Saturday, 9am-5pm

Information and advice on eye conditions and treatments from experienced ophthalmic-trained nurses.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

Phone: 020 7566 2324 or 020 7566 2325

Email: moorfields.pals@nhs.net

Moorfields' PALS team provides confidential advice and support to help you with any concerns you may have about the care we provide, guiding you through the different services available at Moorfields. The PALS team can also advise you on how to make a complaint.

Your right to treatment within 18 weeks

Under the NHS constitution, all patients have the right to begin consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of being referred by their GP. Moorfields is committed to fulfilling this right, but if you feel that we have failed to do so, please contact our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) who will be able to advise you further (see above). For more information about your rights under the NHS constitution, visit www.nhs.uk/choiceinthenhs

