

# EYE UNIT

## Ptosis



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## What is Ptosis

Ptosis is the medical term for a drooping of the upper eyelid. It is a common eye condition.

## What investigations will I have?

These are carried out by an ophthalmologist and include a full history of the eye condition. Lid measurements will be taken to accurately measure the degree of lid drooping and amount of muscle function. Also, your ophthalmologist may request blood tests, X-rays and other tests to assess your eyelid muscle function and to determine the cause of the ptosis to help plan the best treatment. This often involves a surgical operation under local anaesthesia.


## What will happen before my operation? (this is for patients requiring a general anaesthetic only)

You will receive a pre-arranged telephone call from the nursing staff to do an assessment about your medical history, medications and allergies etc and you will be given information relating to your admission. You can ask any questions you have during this telephone appointment.

## What happens after the operation?

In most cases the operation will involve shortening the levator muscle which lifts the eyelid.

- The surgery is performed under local anaesthetic.
- Skin sutures normally dissolve in 1 - 3 weeks and do not need to be removed.

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- After the operation, a “pressure dressing” is sometimes left in place for 24 hours. This is intended to minimize post-operative swelling and bruising.
  - If both eyes have been operated on and a dressing is required, one eye pad will be removed prior to discharge. You will be informed when to remove the second pad.
  - You will be given antibiotic ointment, and sometimes lubricating gels will be prescribed for you after the operation. Please use these as prescribed by the Doctor.
  - As the anaesthetic starts to wear off, it is quite common for the eyelids to ache. This may require a mild painkiller such as paracetamol.

### **How to apply your eye ointment**

- Always wash your hands before putting in the ointment.
- Gently pull the lower lid down with one finger
- Holding the tube apply the ointment along the inside of the lower eyelid. Do not allow the tube to touch the eye.
- Also apply the ointment to the line of stitches.

### **What to expect following surgery**

- Initially the eyelids are often bruised and swollen. This can take up to 6 weeks to completely resolve, sleep with one to two extra pillows if you can, until the swelling settles.
- Inability to close the eye after surgery (lagophthalmos) can occur, particularly after large ptosis corrections. This usually corrects itself with time as the muscles relax.
- It is advisable for the next few days to apply an ice pack (this could be frozen peas or crushed ice in a plastic bag). Up to twice a day for 15 - 20 minutes.
- It is advisable not to exert yourself for the next 24-48 hours.
- The doctor will arrange your follow-up appointment before you leave.

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**If you have any discharge, pain or recurrent bleeding, contact the eye department on the following numbers:**

**Ophthalmology Department**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Central B28 & B29  
Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park  
Bath  
BA1 3NG

**If you have any questions, please call:**

**Monday – Friday 9am -5pm**

**Eye Clinic (01225) 826989**

**Or if you have an emergency on evenings, bank holidays or weekends:**

**Ring the RUH switchboard (01225) 428331 and ask for the on call eye doctor.**

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust  
Combe Park, Bath BA1 3NG  
01225 428331 [www.ruh.nhs.uk](http://www.ruh.nhs.uk)

Please contact the Patient Support and Complaints Team (PSCT) if you require this leaflet in a different format or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email [ruh-tr.psct@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.psct@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.

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