

THREE STEPS AFTER PRK

Ver. 15: Sept 2005

1. Step One- Use your eye drops.

- ✓ FML or Flarex (steroid)– use **4** times daily for the first week, then 3 times daily for the second week, then 2 times daily the third week, then once daily final week
- ✓ Zymar or Vigamox (antibiotic)– **4** times daily, stop after one week
- ✓ Acular (pain relief)– use **4** times daily, stop after 3-4 days
- ✓ Non-preserved tears in individual droppers (Thera-tears or Refresh Plus ONLY)-- use every hour the first week, then 4 times daily for a couple of months. DO NOT use ANY bottled tears, none, not any, we mean it.
- ✓ Use only one drop at a time and wait 5 minutes between different drops, otherwise the second drop will just wash the first one away.

2. Step Two- Protect your eyes and keep them comfortable!

- ✓ Put your drops in while leaning back and then gently close your eyes, so you don't blink your bandage contact off. DO NOT rub your eyes!
- ✓ Wear the protective goggles the first week at night/naps.
- ✓ For the first week, don't get dust or dirt in the eyes, don't get in a hot tub or sauna, do not exercise where you could perspire, don't wear eye makeup.
- ✓ You can shower normally, just keep the soap out of your eyes.
- ✓ Don't swim for 3 weeks.
- ✓ Keep up with your Motrin, take walks in the cold or use a cold compress, and use your drops to keep the eye comfortable. Take Darvocet if they are still hurting.

3. Step Three- Follow up with your eye doctor

- ✓ Your first visit is early the next morning after your procedure. Other visits are on days 4, 7, one month and 10 weeks.
- ✓ **VERY IMPORTANT:** If the contact comes out, DO NOT put it back in, call us and we will need to see you. Your vision does get somewhat worse on Sunday/Monday (day 3 or 4) as the edges heal together. Call us immediately for worsening pain and light sensitivity past Sunday/Monday.

Common Questions

Q. What's the best advice you can give someone after his or her PRK surgery?

A. A positive mental outlook will help you heal better and adapt to the normal fluctuations in vision that everyone experiences. Your vision continues to improve for several months with PRK. Enjoy your vision and make comparisons to how you were seeing without lenses prior to your PRK surgery.

Q. Why does my vision blur at the end of the day or when I've been reading and using the computer for awhile?

A. Dryness and decreased blinking can blur your vision for up to six months after your PRK surgery. Your eyes may not even feel dry, but often they are. Force yourself to blink more frequently and use your artificial tears frequently. **Refresh Plus** or **Thera-Tears** not only makes them feel better, but additionally will help you see and heal better. Taking FLAX seed oil orally often can improve the moisture to your eyes (available at health food stores).

Q. Why is it harder to read now?

A. Most people are a little over-corrected at first, making your near vision worse for about a month. If you are over forty something you'll need reading lenses at least part of the time. You may want to use "dime-store" readers/magnifiers until you have healed enough to get prescription readers.

Q. Why is my vision worse at night?

A. Glare and a loss of contrast in dim conditions is a normal part of the healing process. After about 10 weeks, this starts to fade. If you are struggling with your night vision let your doctor know. There are some drops that can help.

Q. How will I know if I'm going to need an enhancement or touch up?

A. Many people continue to heal for several weeks after their surgery. Your doctor will normally wait for 3 months for your vision to stabilize before doing an enhancement. A good rule of thumb is this: If you're seeing well, you don't need an enhancement. Remember, "perfect vision" at all times is an unrealistic goal and seldom obtainable. Your goal is to see well enough to function without lenses for most distance activities.

Q. Why are my eyes still irritated and dry and my eyelashes have a lot of crusting?

A. You may have a low grade infection of the eyelash margin. Use a warm wash cloth and **gently** scrub your lashes to clean them morning and night. Cleaning the lashes off will allow your tears to work better and you'll see more clearly too.