

Congratulations on the receipt of your new ocular prosthesis. In the ordinary course of events it should provide you with years of good service, however this will not happen without a little care and maintenance from you. So please read on to learn a few simple routines for keeping your prosthesis in peak condition.

### Removing your prosthetic eye

If you are new to wearing a prosthetic eye, or you have had one for a while but don't remove it very often, then it is a good idea to remove your eye over a soft surface. This way if you lose control of the prosthesis it won't land on a hard surface and get chipped or scratched. An easy way to achieve this is to stand your mirror on a table and lay a towel on the tabletop in front of you. If you usually use a bathroom mirror while removing your eye, you can lay the towel in the sink.

To remove your prosthetic eye, start by carefully washing and drying your hands. Place a fingertip on your lower lid and gently ease it down and away from your nose. Keep your other hand ready to catch the prosthesis, as in most cases it will simply slip out and into your waiting hand. If the eye doesn't come out at first, gently apply a little upward pressure under the lower edge of the prosthesis.

If this method fails to work for you, or you don't feel comfortable using your fingers, we can provide you with a small suction cup you can use instead. Run the suction cup under water to wet the tip, then while pinching the suction cup between your thumb and index finger, press the cup against the front of your prosthetic eye. When you have good contact you can relax the pinch and the cup should remain attached to the eye. You may find that you need to hold open your lids a little with your other hand to make things easier. Once the suction cup is firmly attached to the eye, you can gently lift it upwards and tilt backwards to release the lower edge from your lower eyelid, then carefully slide the eye downwards from under the upper eyelid.

### Cleaning and care

As a general rule we recommend that you handle your new eye as little as possible, however as the eye settles into your socket you may experience some discomfort accompanied by some discharge. If this discharge begins to dry on the eye then it is wise to remove the eye and clean it to limit the build up and any potential irritation that may cause. If the discomfort and discharge fails to improve after 14 days please contact us.

It is important that you never use harsh solvents, cleaning chemicals, or abrasives, to clean your prosthetic eye. Although it is made from acrylic, the best approach to caring for your eye is to treat it like it is a part of your body, and only expose it to solutions and handling that you would be comfortable using on yourself. It is especially important to avoid exposing your ocular prosthesis to alcohol as this will damage the acrylic.

The easiest way to clean your prosthetic eye is to rub it between your fingers with a gentle soap, and then rinse it carefully in warm water. Dish soap will work, but many people prefer to use "no tears" baby shampoo as any residue that is not removed by rinsing will be less likely to cause irritation to your socket. If you need to get slightly more aggressive with stubborn surface deposits then rubbing with a **wet** paper towel can be effective. Do not rub with a dry paper towel.

Since it is easy to drop your artificial eye when it is soapy, it is wise to ensure that the sink drain has a guard on it, or you insert the stopper, to prevent your eye from inadvertently becoming the property of the water company.

After cleaning your prosthetic eye, place it on a clean towel while you gently wipe your lids and around your eye with a clean damp tissue to remove residue from dried tears or any fluid discharge that you may experience. There is usually no need to attempt to clean deeper in the socket, as this is usually flushed naturally as you shower or otherwise wash your face.

### Re-inserting the prosthesis

To reinsert your prosthesis, first grip it between your thumb and index finger, then while gently lifting your upper lid with a finger of your other hand, slide the prosthetic eye up under the lid as far as it will go. While holding the prosthetic eye in that position, release the pressure on the upper lid and gently pull down on the lower lid to allow the bottom edge of the prosthesis to slip into place.

On occasion it is possible for a prosthetic eye to turn as it is being inserted. If this happens it is not necessary to remove the eye again, instead simply place the tip of a finger on the surface of the eye and gently push it to rotate it into the correct position. Alternatively you can reattach the suction cup to the front of the eye and twist to achieve the correct orientation.

### Other things to know

Once a year it is wise to return to Prosthetics at Graphica Medica to have your eye polished. This is useful to remove protein deposits that will build up on the surface of your eye despite your regular care, and can cause discomfort. Polishing also removes any small scratches that cause irritation, and gives your ocularist an opportunity to reassess the condition, fit, and color match as the prosthesis ages. Regular checkups will also allow your ocularist to recommend timely changes to your cleaning routine, or the prosthesis, as and when they may be required to keep your prosthesis in the best condition for as long as possible.

Occasionally you might experience dryness in the socket of your prosthetic eye, on these occasions you may use over-the-counter artificial tears, or contact lens lubricating solutions to improve your comfort. If the dry eye symptoms persist or begin to interfere with your day to day

life, it might be time to get the eye polished by your ocularist, or make an appointment with your doctor.

If you have any questions about the care of your prosthetic eye, or would like additional suction cups, feel free to email or call Prosthetics at Graphica Medica.

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