



Melanie Ho Erb, M.D.

A Surgeon's Hands, A Woman's Touch

Laser Cosmetic and Oculo-Facial Plastic Surgery

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YOUR SURGERY CENTER OR HOSPITAL **SURGERY WITH DR. ERB**

Before your surgery

Time off of work:

1. You will be bruised and swollen for approximately 2 weeks after surgery. Because people heal differently, there can be a range from 3 days to 4 weeks.
2. Your vision will also be blurry for approximately 1 week after surgery. Again, because people heal differently, there can be a range from 3 days to 4 weeks.
3. If it does not bother you to have your coworkers see you bruised and swollen, then you may return as soon as your vision is clear enough to do your work: 1 day if doing 1 eyelid at a time, variable (1 day to 2 weeks) if doing both eyelids at the same time.
4. If you do not want to be seen bruised or swollen at work, then you should take 2 weeks off of work, and rarely possibly more.

Today:

1. Pick your surgery date
2. Mark the surgery date on your calendar
3. Read this whole handout, including post-operative instructions at the end of this document

Over the next few days:

1. Arrange your ride home from the surgery
2. Schedule an appointment with your primary care provider for a preoperative history and physical which will also include bloodwork and, if you are over 50, an EKG.
3. Your appointment can be more than 30 days before your surgery. Dr. Erb will update any information on the day of surgery, if needed.

2 weeks before surgery:

1. **Stop all over the counter medications and supplements** such as

- a. Multivitamins
 - b. Fish Oil
 - c. Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin)
 - d. Aspirin
 - e. Naproxen (Aleve)
2. If you have a headache within the 2 weeks before surgery, then **take acetaminophen** (Tylenol) **instead of aspirin or ibuprofen** (Advil, Motrin)
3. If you are taking any blood thinners, like the ones below, **please discuss with Dr. Erb, or your PCP, or your cardiologist, whether you should continue or stop these blood thinners.**
4. **Only if your doctor said that you can stop your blood thinner**, then follow the directions below on when to stop taking your blood thinner:
 - a. Stop Plavix (clopidogrel) 1 week before surgery
 - b. Stop Coumadin (warfarin) 5 days before surgery
 - c. Stop Pradaxa (dabigatran) 2 days before surgery
 - d. Stop Eliquis (apixaban) 2 days before surgery
 - e. Stop Xarelto (fivaroxaban) 1 day before surgery
5. In some cases, surgery can be performed while on blood thinners.
6. Stop smoking, if possible. OK to use Nicoderm patches (21mg or 14 mg strength) instead, which is available downstairs.
7. Get ice packs ready
 - a. Crushed ice in Ziploc baggies or
 - b. Frozen peas or frozen corn in Ziploc baggies
8. Call Gina at our office 949-727-0102 so that we can
 - a. Confirm your surgery date
 - b. Make sure that we have your PCP's phone number so that we can get a copy of your history and physical, bloodwork, and EKG from him/her.
 - c. Answer any questions you have
 - d. Review pre-operative preparations
 - e. Review post-operative instructions

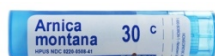
- f. Call in your post-operative medications to your pharmacy
 - g. Mail you a prescription for pain medicine, just in case
 - h. Set up your post-operative appointment
 - i. Collect your payment
9. Review your post-operative instructions, which is at the end of this document.

2 days before surgery:

1. Pick up your post-operative medications from your pharmacy.
2. Buy over-the-counter Acetaminophen 500 mg (Tylenol extra strength) or Acetaminophen 325 mg (Tylenol regular strength) in case you have mild discomfort after surgery.



3. You may pick up your stronger pain medication, Norco, or you can wait until after your surgery to see if you will really need it. You need to carry in the prescription for this medication.
4. 2 days before your surgery, you may start High Doses of Vitamin C, oral Arnica Montana, and/or oral Bromelin/Bromelain, if desired. Some patients feel that it makes bruising and swelling go down faster after surgery. Other patients feel that it makes no difference.
 - a. Vitamin C, any brand, any strength. Vitamin C can be found at any pharmacy or grocery store. Take enough pills to make your dose 2,000 mg per day.
 - b. Oral Arnica Montana pills, 30c. Arnica can be found at the **pharmacy downstairs** or Mothers. Read package instructions. Take 5 pills 3 times per day.
 - c. Oral Bromelin/Bromelain, 500 mg. Bromelin/Bromelain can be found at Mothers. Take 1 pill 2 times per day.



The day of your surgery:

1. **Do not eat or drink anything.**

2. Take most of your normal morning prescription medications with a small amount of water. Do not take any oral diabetic medications and cut your morning insulin dose in half.
3. Do not take over the counter medications or supplements like you have been doing for past 2 weeks
4. Wash face well
5. Do not wear makeup or any products on face or hair
6. Do not wear contact lenses. Wear glasses
7. Do not wear jewelry and do not bring valuables
8. Wear comfortable clothes
9. Bring your post-operative prescription medications with you so that we can go over instructions
10. Arrive for surgery
11. The surgery schedule is fluid and changes often on the day of surgery. Surgery start times are estimates. You may experience delays. You may be called to see if you can arrive earlier. Rest assured that we will take as much time needed for YOUR surgery to do the best job that we can.
12. You must have a ride home

Just before your surgery and during your surgery:

13. You will re-discuss the surgical plan with Dr. Erb
14. You can ask whatever questions you have
15. You will sign your consent
16. We can review the post operative medications with you if you would like
17. We can review the post operative instructions with you if you would like
18. Your comfort and safety is Dr Erb's utmost concern
19. Most patients will not remember anything
20. Dr. Erb injects the skin with numbing medicine
21. We will take good care of you!

Post-operative instructions

After your surgery:

Immediately, in the recovery room:

1. Bloody tears are normal. You may wipe away bloody tears with a tissue. If you have too much bloody tears, then place tissue or ice pack on eyelid and hold pressure for 5 minutes
2. You will have difficulty closing your eyes for a few hours because of the numbing injection medication
3. Your vision will be blurry for a few hours because there will be ointment on your eyeball.
4. Make sure you hold onto your driver's arm as you walk from the office to car and from the car to house because your vision will be blurry and you may still have relaxing medicine in your system

At home, same day of surgery:

1. Lie down with cold packs in place. Best (but not required) is with head elevated onto 2 or 3 pillows.
2. Use cold gel packs or frozen peas in a ziplock baggie AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE AND CONSTANTLY immediately after surgery and through day 3. Put a dry or damp washcloth on eyelids and place the cold pack on top of it. You can tape it in place at your forehead.
3. For pain:
 - a. If you do not have pain, you do not need to take any pain medicine
 - b. If your pain is mild, you may take Tylenol (acetaminophen)
 - c. If your pain is moderate, you may use the prescription to take Norco
4. At dinner time, start your
 - a. Antibiotic pill (Bactrim or Minocycline or Cipro). You will continue 2 times per day until gone.
 - b. Maxitrol ointment (neomycin and polymyxin B sulfates and dexamethasone) to your stitches. You will continue 2-3 times per day until you see Dr. Erb.
 - c. Maxitrol eyedrops (neomycin and polymyxin B sulfates and dexamethasone) to put on the eyeball (only prescribed on certain surgeries). You will continue 2-4 times per day until you see Dr. Erb.

- d. If you receive a prescription for 2 different eyedrop bottles, then make sure that the 2 eyedrops are used at least 15 minutes apart, so the second eyedrop does not wash away the first eyedrop
5. If you take glaucoma eyedrops, then keep taking them as usual.
6. You may continue High Dose Vitamin C, Arnica Montana 30c, and Bromelain by mouth for 1 week
7. Swelling and bruising get worse on days 1 through 3, then start to improve

Post op day 1, the day after surgery:

1. Take the anti-inflammatory medication (Predisone) in the morning. All of the day 1 prednisone pills are taken in the morning. There will be a tapering medication schedule. Not everyone is prescribed prednisone.
2. You may shower the day after your surgery and you may wash the stitches with water
3. You may wash your hair and face.
4. Blood stuck to stitches can be gently and carefully removed with hydrogen peroxide on a Q-tip
5. Continue using cold packs constantly and as much as possible atop a dry or damp washcloth.
6. If you stopped your Coumadin, Eliquis, Xarelto, then restart it the day after surgery
7. Continue taking your post op medications
8. You may read or watch TV, if desired.
9. The healing process takes a little time. You may experience some soreness or feel uncomfortable in the operated area immediately following surgery. However, in general, you should feel better and better each day. If at any time you begin to experience pain, discomfort, or feel worse, please contact Dr. Erb.

Post op day 3

1. Swelling and bruising get worse on days 1 through 3, then start to improve
2. Continue using cold packs constantly and as much as possible atop a dry or moist washcloth.

Post op day 4

1. You may decrease cold packs to 4 times per day or you may start using a warm damp washcloth to eyelids 4 times per day, or you can alternate both cold and warm, whichever feels best to you.

Post op day 7

1. If you stopped your Aspirin, Plavix, then restart it
2. You may discontinue your vitamin C, Arnica Montana, and Bromelain

Post op day 8 to 14

1. Dr. Erb will remove your stitches
2. She will inform you whether you should continue your ointment and/or eyedrops

Other

1. These are your restrictions:
 - a. Rest for 3 days after surgery so that you can use cold packs as much as possible..
 - b. You may watch TV or work on the computer after surgery. There are no restrictions.
 - c. You may drive when you feel that you are safe to drive based on the blurriness of your vision.
 - d. No eye makeup for 2 weeks after surgery.
 - e. No contact lenses for 2 weeks after surgery. Wear glasses.
 - f. No strenuous exercise (running) for 2 weeks after surgery. Walking is fine.
 - g. No heavy lifting, over 20 pounds, for 2 weeks after surgery.
 - h. No bending over or head down positions for 2 weeks after surgery.
 - i. No water from swimming pools, hot tubs, or the ocean on stitches for 2 weeks after surgery. Shower water is fine.

WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE AFTER SURGERY:

Call the office or Dr. Erb's cell phone, anytime day or night, if swollen eyelids feel firm, like a tennis ball, or if your vision is very blurry (cannot read print of very large size).

Post op phone calls, questions, and selfies:

Please call the office at 949-727-0102 if you have any questions.

If your question is urgent, please call or text Dr. Erb on her cell phone.

The office voicemail message provides Dr. Erb's cell phone number, if you need to reach her.

You may request Dr. Erb's cell phone number from Gina on the day of surgery.

Dr. Erb likes to receive your selfie photos as you are healing.

We are always here for you!

Dr. Erb's cell phone # (receives texts) _____