

Face Down Posturing

Information on correct face down posturing after eye surgery



You have been asked to position face down until (Date):

_____ / _____ / _____

If gas or oil has been used in your eye, it is important you keep your head facing down during your recovery. To help you with this, specialist chairs and headrests are available for hire from some physiotherapists. If you choose not to hire specialist equipment, alternatives that achieve the same result are available.

The correct posture for your recovery period is either sitting or lying with your head facing down, supported with special equipment, pillows or similar. Always try to keep your spine in a straight line and keep your hands and elbows at the same height as, or lower than your shoulders.

Before setting up where you will be sitting or lying, make sure that the surface you are using to support your head (under equipment or pillows) is steady and won't move. Also check that you have everything you need so you don't have to move around once you are settled.

Whether sitting at a table or lying down, you can support your head with a pillow(s). Boomerang pillows are ideal for resting your head while allowing a space to breath. If you do not have a boomerang pillow you can simply use two regular pillows as shown in Figure 1 (top left). Rest your forehead on the pillow and make sure that there is no pressure on your eye.

Remember to keep your spine in a straight line and keep your hands and elbows at the same height as, or lower than your shoulders. Do not cradle your head with your forearms as this will make your shoulders and neck very stiff. Keep your arms in your lap, by your sides or tuck them under the pillow your head rests on.

Give yourself a break every hour for about 10 minutes. Use this time to eat, shower and for toilet breaks. Make the effort to get up and walk around when you have your break to avoid stiffness but be very careful when you get up. Some people feel faint or unsteady on their feet when they try to get up. Take it slowly and carefully.

Figure 1. Correct face down posture

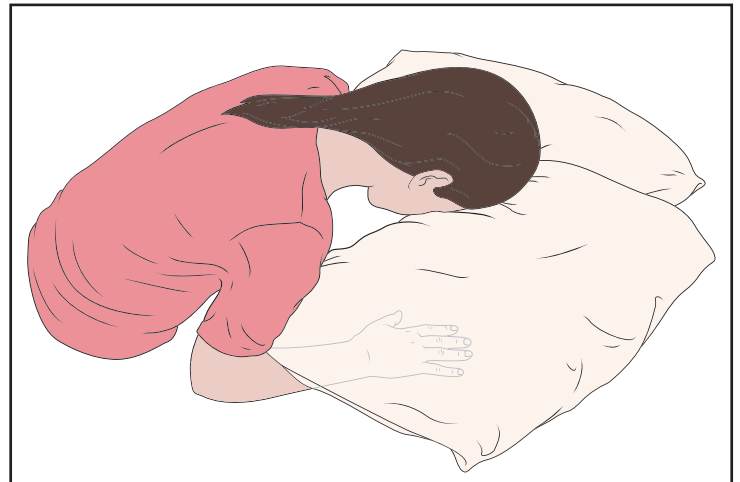


Figure 2. Incorrect face down posture



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Specialist chairs and headrests are available for hire from some physiotherapists. Details are available from your doctor or the ward nurses. Even if you choose not to hire the special equipment, these pictures (Top left and bottom left) are good examples of the correct posture.

You must follow the supplier's recommendations carefully.

Facedown chairs are not appropriate for people over 90 kg (15 stone), or taller than 6 feet (183 cm).

You may find the chairs are difficult to use if you have limited mobility or problems with your knees. Headrests can be used on most beds and can be fitted on tables for daytime use.

Figure 3. Example of chair for hire.

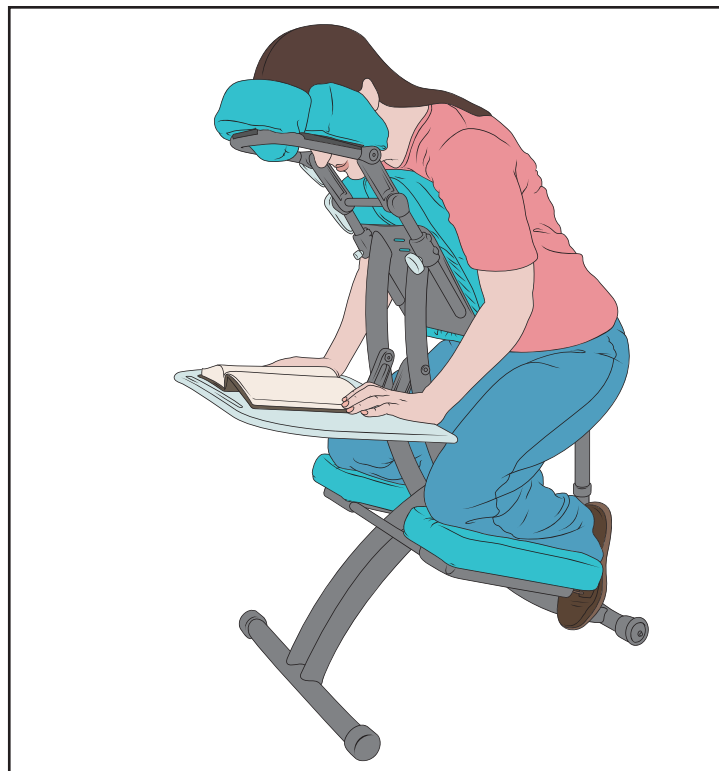


Figure 4. Example of headrest for hire.

