

Patient Information Handout: Three-Snip Procedure for Watery Eyes

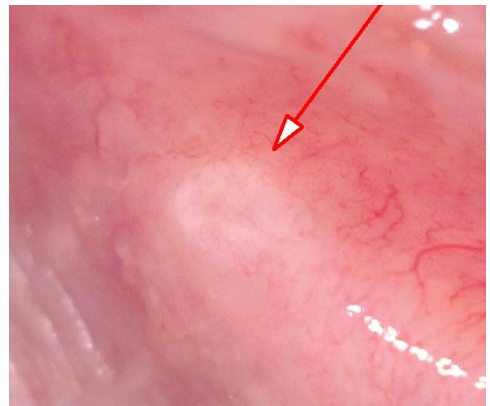
C2910 – Punctal – Punctoplasty

Introduction to the Three-Snip Procedure – Punctal Punctoplasty

The three-snip procedure is a minor surgical technique designed to treat watery eyes (epiphora) caused by a blockage or narrowing of the lacrimal punctum, the tiny opening through which tears drain from the eye into the nose. This leaflet provides essential information about the procedure, its benefits, risks, and post-operative care.

What is the Lacrimal Punctum?

The lacrimal punctum is a small opening located at the inner corner of the upper and lower eyelids. It allows tears to drain from the surface of the eye into the lacrimal sac and then into the nose. When this opening is blocked or too narrow, it can cause tears to overflow onto the cheek, leading to watery eyes.

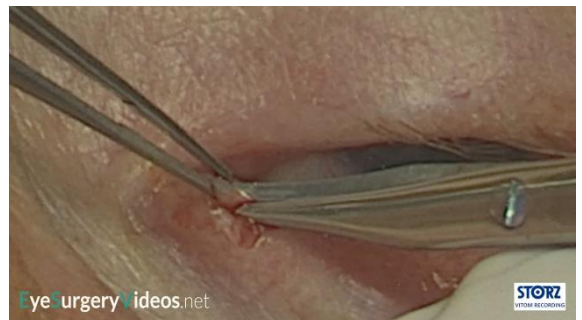


Why is the Three-Snip Procedure Needed

This procedure is typically recommended when conservative treatments for watery eyes, such as eye drops or punctal plugs, have not provided relief. It aims to widen the lacrimal punctum and improve tear drainage.

The Procedure

- Duration: The procedure usually takes about 15 minutes.
- Anaesthesia: Local anaesthesia is applied to numb the area.
- Process: The surgeon makes three small cuts (snips) to enlarge the lacrimal punctum. This is done using fine, precise instruments.



- Recovery Area: You may spend a short time in the recovery area following the procedure.

Post-Operative Care

- Immediate Care: You might experience mild discomfort or watering immediately after the procedure. This is normal and should subside.
- Medication: Antibiotic eye drops or ointment may be prescribed to prevent infection.
- Activity Restrictions: Avoid rubbing your eyes for a few days post-surgery.

- Follow-Up: A follow-up appointment is usually scheduled to monitor healing and ensure the effectiveness of the procedure.

Potential Risks and Complications

As with any surgical procedure, there are potential risks, though they are rare in the case of the three-snip operation. These may include infection, bleeding, or a reaction to the anaesthesia. In some cases, there may be a need for further procedures if the initial surgery does not fully resolve the symptoms.

When to Contact Your Doctor

Please seek immediate medical attention if you experience any of the following after the procedure:

- Severe pain not relieved by over-the-counter painkillers.
- Increased redness, swelling, or discharge from the eye.
- Any changes in your vision.

Conclusion

The three-snip procedure is a safe and effective treatment for watery eyes due to a narrowed or blocked lacrimal punctum. It can significantly improve your comfort and quality of life. If you have any questions or concerns about the procedure, please do not hesitate to contact your ophthalmologist.

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