

## Post Mortem Eye Care for Potential Eye Donors

Tear production stops at the time of death, so it doesn't take long for the cornea to dry out. Another problem is lubricating ointments used prior to death tend to congeal. This can pull away the delicate epithelial covering of the cornea. For all potential eye donors, the following eye care regimen should be performed. This should be done as soon as possible. The Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank is sensitive to the needs of the families, so their needs must come first. A saline rinse prior to giving the family time with their loved one is recommended to keep some moisture in the eye.



Rinse both eyes with sterile saline or balanced salt solution. This will help remove any residue from lubricating ointments used prior to death. This step can be done prior to family viewing and then repeated after the family has performed its bedside rituals.



Close both eyelids using your fingers. Do not use forceps or other instruments as they can easily damage the eyelids.



Cover both closed eyes with a compress (2x2 or 4x4 gauze) soaked in saline. The compress should be dripping wet if possible. Do not press the gauze hard onto the eyes. Set it gently on top of the eyes, ensuring it covers the lid line.



Elevate the head using a pillow or head block. This helps fluids drain from the head, minimizing the chance of bleeding or bruising during the eye tissue recovery procedure.