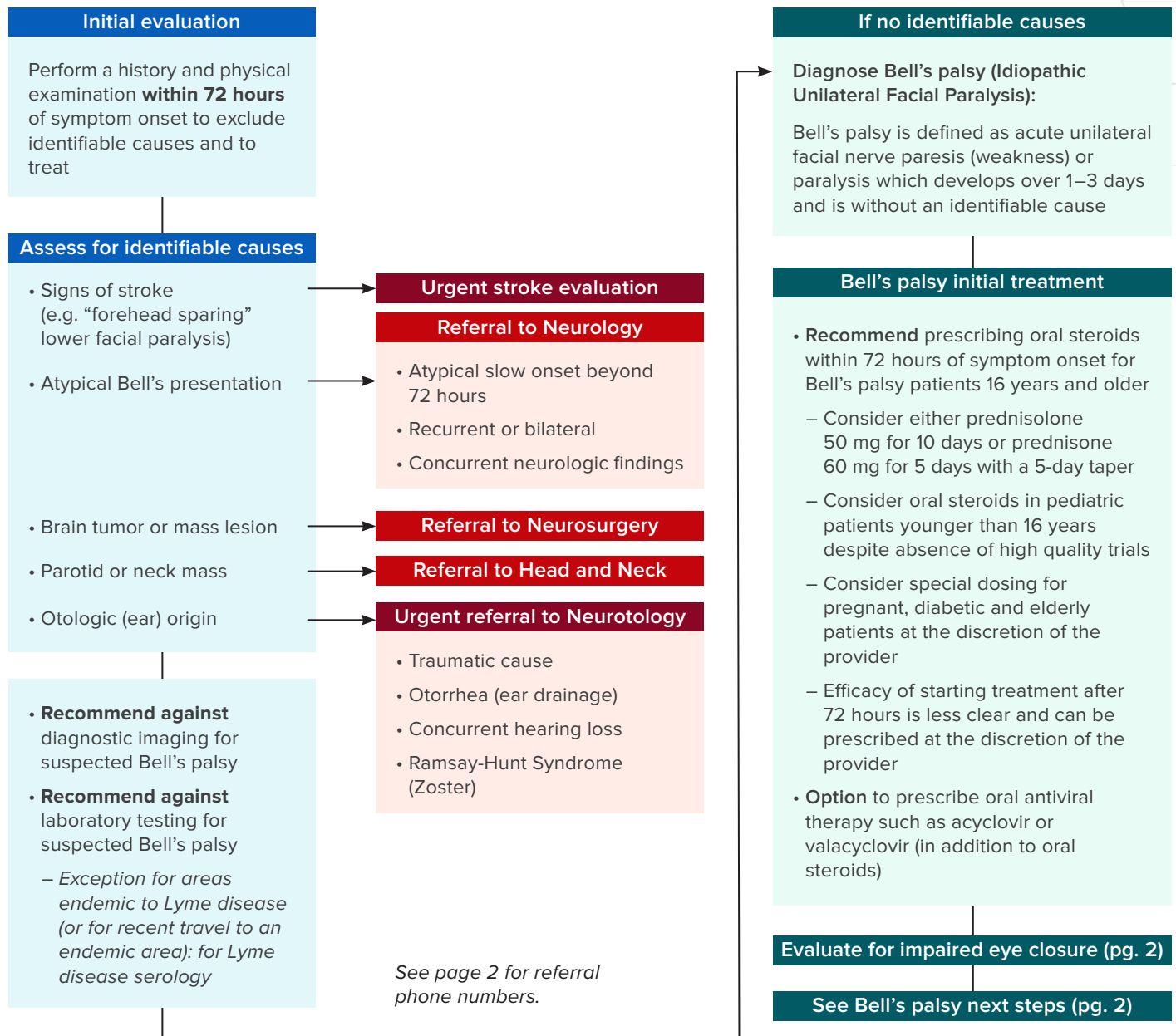
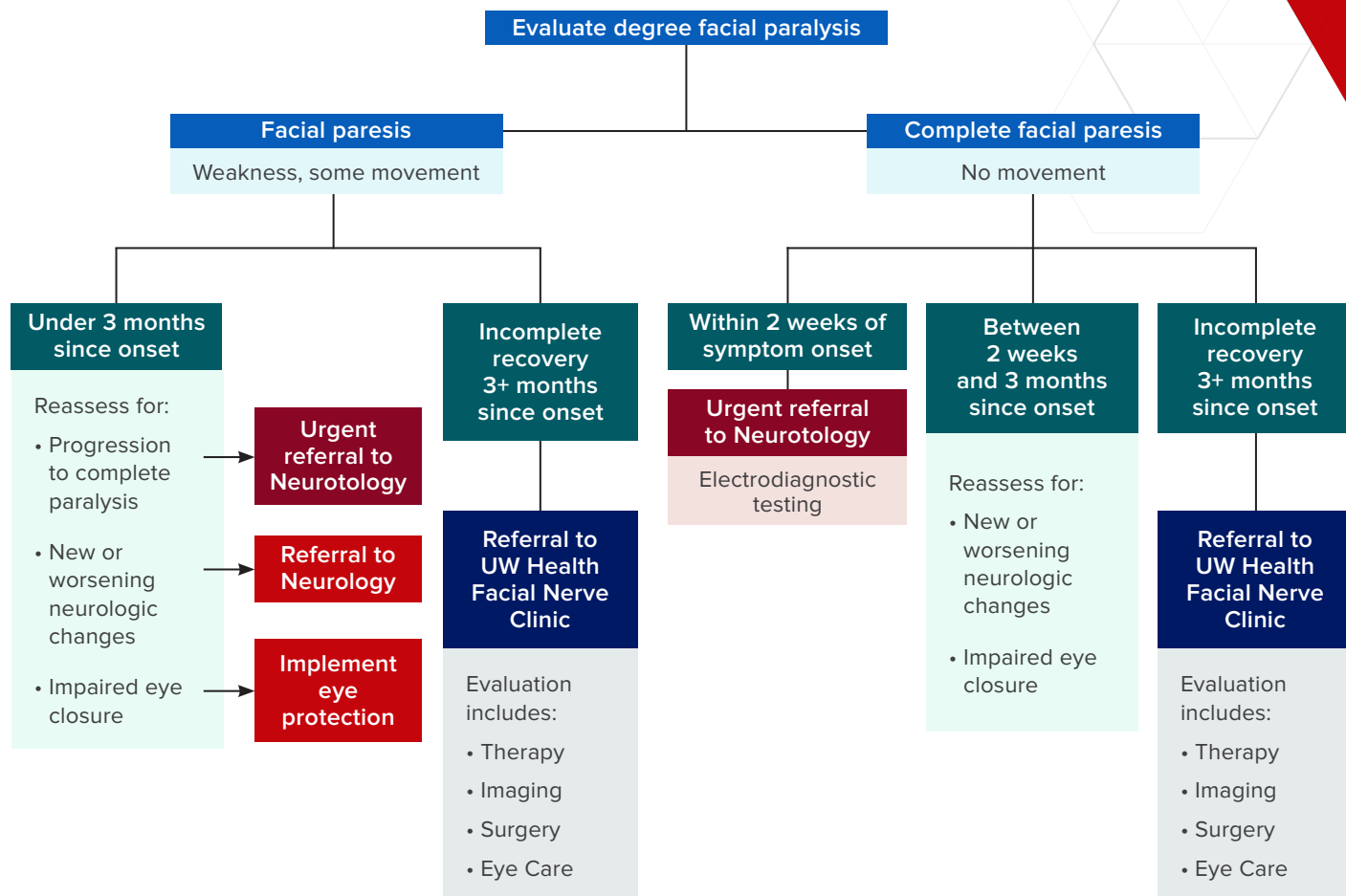


Evaluating facial nerve paralysis

Initial facial paralysis evaluation within 72 hours of onset



Bell's palsy next steps



Eye care for facial paralysis

Protection for impaired eye closure

- Frequent use of lubricating ophthalmic drops such as “artificial tears”
- Frequent use of ophthalmic ointments at night
- Early referral to an eye doctor: uwhealth.org/eyes
- Use of wraparound sunglasses
- Use of moisture chamber at night
- Tape eye at night (with teaching)

For patients with complete paralysis, consider early referral.

Referral phone numbers

Facial Nerve Clinic.....	(608) 263-6190
Head and Neck Surgery....	(608) 263-6190
Neurology.....	(608) 263-5442
Neurosurgery.....	(608) 263-7502
Neurotology.....	(608) 263-6190
Oculoplastic Surgery.....	(608) 265-7790
Ophthalmology.....	(608) 263-7171

Synkinesis evaluation and treatment

Although many patients with facial paralysis will see improvement, sometimes the facial muscles can “over-correct” causing the face to become tight, stiff or “heavy.” The eye may appear small. The crease between the side of the nose and corner of mouth (nasolabial fold) may seem deeper than the unaffected side. In some cases, the facial nerve can heal improperly causing muscles to contract out of sequence at the same time. For example, the eye may close during a smile or pucker, or the cheek may pull up when the eye closes. This improper movement, called synkinesis, can result in uncoordinated or distorted facial expression.

Evaluation of synkinesis

- Occurs in cases of delayed recovery after peripheral facial nerve injury
- Patients may describe facial tightness, pain, spasm or uncoordinated muscle movement
- Develops six months after onset of paralysis or later

Treatment of synkinesis

- Facial retraining may improve expression through muscle coordination
- Botulinum toxin has been shown to temporarily reduce facial spasm and improve synkinesis
- The **UW Health Facial Nerve Clinic** specializes in treatment of synkinesis

What to do before synkinesis develops

- Avoid maximum-effort exercises of facial muscles, which may worsen asymmetry
- Avoid electrical stimulation, which may increase abnormal movements
- Softly and gently stroke affected side of the face, as this may help brain’s sensory awareness of that side and promote more normal recovery