

EYELID SURGERY

Notes for guidance

As we age, the effects of time become apparent, even in the most seemingly insignificant places. What that happens, a part of our body that we may never have given much attention to can suddenly interfere with our self-esteem and self-confidence.

Such is the case with the eyelids. When we get older, our eyelids – like much of our bodies – begin to droop and sag. Our eyelids can also become so puffy they interfere with our normal vision. Although the appearance of our eyelids may seem minor, no one wants to look older or more exhausted than their physical age. For this reason, some women and men are turning to eyelid surgery for help.

Is eyelid surgery right for you?

There are a number of reasons to consider having eyelid surgery performed. If your eyelids are preventing you from seeing normally, then the surgery may not only be important for improving your appearance but for improving your quality of life.

You might also consider having eyelid surgery done if you're already having other plastic surgery completed on your face, such as a facelift. Of course, if you look in the mirror and are unhappy with the drooping of your eyelids, then the surgery is definitely worth thinking about.

What is eyelid surgery?

Eyelid surgery, also known as Blepharoplasty, is a surgical procedure meant to remove excess fat deposits around the eyes to prevent drooping and sagging. The procedure makes the eyelids look more youthful and less tired. Patients can choose to have only their upper or lower eyelids corrected, or they have all four eyelids completed at the same time. Eyelid surgery is often performed in conjunction with other plastic surgery procedures.

Most eyelid surgeries are performed in outpatient medical facilities or the surgeon's office. Because only a local anesthetic is used to numb the area, you will not usually need to be hospitalized and can return home the same day. You won't feel any pain, but you may feel some tugging or other movement as the procedure is being completed. To minimize your discomfort and nervousness, most surgeons will also give their patients sedatives.

Are you a good candidate?

Good candidates for eyelid surgery have realistic expectations for the procedure. While the surgery will get rid of the sagging that makes people look older and more tired, it won't correct wrinkles around the eyes. That requires an additional procedure. Also, this surgery alone won't create the drastic results some patients are looking for.

The best candidates are also healthy. Certain health problems can make the procedure riskier, such as hypothyroidism and diabetes. If your eyes do not produce sufficient tears or if you have other eye problems, the procedure may not be a good choice. Surgeons will usually request confirmation from an ophthalmologist that you have had a recent eye exam and that your eyes are healthy.

As with most types of plastic surgery, smokers will be asked to stop smoking before the procedure because the behavior can cause healing problems. You'll also be told to stop taking certain types of medications. Following the rules outlined by your surgeon will reduce your risks and will improve your chances of being satisfied with the results.

How is the procedure performed?

Before the surgery, you and your surgeon will need to discuss the specifics of what you'd like to have done, including which eyelids will be operated on and whether you need transconjunctival blepharoplasty (removing excess fat from under the eyes) performed.

Your surgeon will start with the upper lids by making an incision around the curve of your eye. Next, he or she will disconnect your skin from the underlying fat and muscle, then suctions out the extra fat from the area. When the extra fat is removed, your surgeon will work on trimming away excess muscles, as well as extra skin so the area will look tighter and will no longer droop. Afterward, the incision is sutured using tiny stitches. The procedure is then repeated for the lower eyelids but the incision is made under the lower eyelashes.

Some patients will also have transconjunctival blepharoplasty done at the same time. During this procedure, a separate incision is made under the lower lids and extra fat is gently removed using forceps. No excess skin or muscle is removed, but the procedure can eliminate the small rolls of fat that can accumulate under the eyes. Again, the incision is sewed up using small stitches.

Eyelid surgery usually lasts one to three hours depending on the number of eyelids being completed and if transconjunctival blepharoplasty is being performed.

How long will it take before I feel normal again?

Immediately after your surgery, your eyes will feel a little sore and may begin to feel dry after the lubrication applied by the surgeon starts to wear off. To combat that feeling, you will probably need to use eye drops regularly for the first few weeks and will need to follow special procedures for cleaning your eyes.

In 2 to 7 days after the surgery, your stitches will be removed. For another two to three weeks, the area around your eyes will continue to be bruised and swollen. During that time, you may have more tearing than normal and possibly some minor vision disturbances; these problems are only temporary and usually subside as the area continues to heal.

After the first week, you'll probably be able to return to work. You won't be able to wear contacts for at least two weeks, so if you usually wear contact lenses, you'll need to have a pair of prescription eyeglasses available. To prevent damaging the surgical site, your surgeon will ask you to avoid strenuous activities for at least three weeks; these activities may include housework, heavy lifting, holding your child, and having sex. He or she may also ask you to avoid drinking alcohol and smoking until your healing is complete. Within 3 to 4 weeks after your eyelid surgery, you'll see the discoloration and puffiness gradually go away and you'll begin to feel normal.

Are there any risks?

Eyelid surgery is generally very safe and any problems, such as blurred vision, are usually temporary. However, there are always risks

involved with any surgical procedure. The most serious usually involve complications from the anesthesia and untreated infections. In rare cases, eyelid surgery patients may lose the ability to close their eyes when they sleep.

Most of the minor complications, such as the vision changes, are temporary and go away during the healing process. Following your surgeon's advice and not smoking will reduce your risks of developing problems after surgery and will speed up the healing process.

Will I be happy with my results?

For the first three to four weeks after your surgery, you may be disappointed with what you see in the mirror, but that's usually because of the normal swelling and bruising that follow the surgery. If you were honest with your surgeon about your expectations, you will become more satisfied with the results as the healing continues, and most patients are eventually very pleased with the outcome of their eyelid surgeries and their new, refreshed and youthful look.

Further Information

This brochure has been prepared to give a basic understanding of the procedure before a consultation takes place, and to cover many of the questions frequently asked about this type of cosmetic surgery. Final decisions should not be made until an individual assessment has taken place with the surgeon.

There is no obligation on the part of the patient to undergo surgery by attending for consultation.

If you have any further questions or would like to arrange a consultation please fill in the online form on our website at www.surgeryone.co.uk. All enquiries are always treated confidentially.