

Droopy upper eyelids and bags under the lower eyelids can give us a worn and tired appearance. Blepharoplasty, also called eyelid surgery, helps women and men with excess eyelid skin, remove or reposition fat, to give the eyes a more youthful, refreshed look. Some people have eyelid surgery to correct problems that are as a result of aging, while others have inherited traits such as under eye bags that cause them to seek treatment in their 20s or 30s.

Excess upper eyelid skin, is often accompanied by sagging eyebrows, which is best treated by a browlift. Fine wrinkling and crow's feet may require chemical peeling or injectables for additional improvement of lines and wrinkles. Circles beneath the eyes caused by dark pigmentation may be lightened with a bleaching solution or chemical peel. Many patients combine eyelid surgery with other procedures like facelift for more impressive results.

High blood pressure, thyroid problems or diabetes are some of the conditions that can increase the risks of eyelid surgery. Allergies and dry eyes can also affect the type of eyelid Surgery that suits you.

You may find your eyes are temporarily sensitive to light or also experience some excess tearing or dryness. We recommend eye drops to relieve burning or itching. You might want to wear dark sunglasses for a couple of weeks to protect your eyes from the wind and sun. The incision lines will fade over several months until they become barely visible.

Some patients may require a preoperative consultation with an ophthalmologist.

What kind of anaesthetic will I need?

Local anaesthetic is used for upper eyelid surgery but general anaesthetic is recommended for the lower eyelids.

What are the risks of surgery?

As with any other surgery, eyelid surgery carries a small risk of infection and bleeding. Blindness due to bleeding in the eye socket has been reported to occur following surgery (both blepharoplasty and ptosis repair). The incidence of this extremely rare complication has been calculated to be 0.005%. Some patients notice that their eyes feel dry after eyelid surgery. This can be controlled with lubricating eye drops. Because surgery is not an exact science and healing is not completely predictable, revision may be necessary, though this is unlikely.

How much pain will I have after surgery?

Surprisingly little. The vast majority of patients need no more than paracetamol and most do not even need that. For lower lid surgery, the incision is made just under the lower eyelashes to remove excess skin and the fat is removed or re-draped to improve the contour of the lower eyelid.

Will I have visible scars?

The incisions for upper eyelid surgery are essentially invisible after healing. The cut is hidden within the natural fold of the upper eyelid and it is through this incision that excess skin and/or fat are removed. Because the incision follows the natural contour of the upper eyelid, it will be well camouflaged when healed.

When can I use my contact lenses after eyelid surgery?

Generally it's best to wait one or two weeks after surgery. It is normal to have a decrease in tear production and is therefore a good idea to use lubricating drops with your contact lenses when you use them.

How long will it take to recover?

Expect some bruising and swelling post surgery. Different people heal at different rates, but around 70% of the swelling and bruising will subside after one week. Within two weeks, 90%. After two weeks, it is often difficult to tell that the patient has had eyelid surgery.

When will I be able to return to work?

People undergoing only upper eyelid surgery generally feel comfortable returning to work after 1 to 1½ weeks. People undergoing lower lid surgery only or both upper and lower lid surgery often take up to two weeks.

Will the stitches need to be removed?

The sutures are usually removed 5-7 days post surgical.

Will insurance cover my eyelid surgery?

Insurance covers ptosis repair in most cases because the eyelids are obstructing vision. It may cover blepharoplasty if the skin folds are over the eyelashes and directly obstructing central vision, but certain specific requirements must be met and you need to check with your insurance provider.

Post-operative Do's and Don'ts

- Do wear dark glasses for your journey home as you may find your eyes are more sensitive to light and glasses will help hide any bruising.
- Ensure you get plenty of rest in the first 48 hours post procedure and ensure you are adequately hydrated and maintain a healthy diet.
- Avoid heavy lifting and bending for 7 days post the procedure.
- Do sleep for the first couple of nights with your head raised on 2-3 pillows to prevent any further swelling.
- Do use cold packs as a method of reducing swelling.
- Take paracetamol as required.
- Shower the day after surgery although avoid the direct pressure of the water on your face/eyes. You can wash your hair as normal and then use the hair dryer on a cool setting to dry the area around your eyes.
- Do use the eye ointment which will be provided. The ointment needs to be applied just before you go to bed and is a mild antibiotic as well as providing your eyes with lubrication at night. The ointment can cause some blurriness which is only temporary and resolves by the morning.
- Do not apply any make up, cosmetics or creams to your eyes for at least 2 weeks after your procedure. We will advise you at your consultation when you can begin moisturizing and massaging the areas again.