

Blepharoplasty/ Eyelid Surgery

Blepharoplasty or Eyelid Surgery involves the removal of excessive skin and fat of the upper eye lids for enhancement of a patients appearance or to improve a patients visual field function. The latter is covered by some insurance carriers but, requires preoperative evaluations and testing such as, visual field testing of the eyes. Consult with your plastic surgeon to see if this procedure could be a covered service by your insurance carrier.

Eyelid surgery can correct puffy eyes and excessive upper eyelid skin. It does not remove crows feet, dark circles under the eyes or a sagging/ droopy brow. Blepharoplasty can be done alone, or in conjunction with other facial surgery procedures such as a facelift or browlift.

The best candidates for eyelid surgery are men and women who are healthy, psychologically stable, and realistic in their expectations. Most are 45 years of age or older. But if droopy, baggy eyelids run in your family, you may decide to have eyelid surgery at a younger age. Some medical conditions make blepharoplasty more risky. They include thyroid problems such as hypothyroidism and Graves' disease, dry eye or lack of sufficient tears, high blood pressure or cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. A detached retina or glaucoma is also reason for caution.

Your evaluation before surgery should include determination if you have upper eyelid ptosis/ drooping, ectropion/ inverted lower eyelids, ectropion/ everted/ sagging lower eye lids or other eyelid disorders. Often these conditions are corrected in conjunction with your Blepharoplasty or Eyelid Surgery. Make sure to avoid blood thinners before and immediately after your surgery.

Blepharoplasty usually takes one to two hours, depending on the extent of the surgery. In a typical procedure, the surgeon makes incisions following the natural lines of your eyelids. The incisions may extend into the crow's feet or laugh lines at the outer corners of your eyes. The surgeon separates the skin from underlying fatty tissue and muscle, removes excess fat, and often trims sagging skin and muscle. Sometimes, if you have a pocket of fat beneath your lower eyelids but don't need to have any skin removed, your surgeon may perform a transconjunctival blepharoplasty. In this procedure the incision is made inside your lower eyelid in the conjunctiva leaving no visible scar. It is usually performed on younger patients.

After your surgery anticipate swelling. Cool compresses assist in decreasing the swelling for the first 3 to 4 days. After this point luke warm compresses are more helpful and soothing. You should be able to read or watch television within two or three days. You won't be able to wear contact lenses for about two weeks. Most patients feel ready to go out in public (and back to work) in a week to 10 days. Even then you still may have some bruising. You may be sensitive to sunlight, wind, and other irritants for

several months, so you should consider wearing sunglasses. Avoid strenuous activities for about three weeks.

Healing is a gradual process, and your scars may remain slightly pink for several months or more after surgery. Eventually, though, they'll fade. The positive results of your eyelid surgery-the more alert and youthful look-can last for years. For many patients, these results are permanent.