

# Eyelid Surgery

Blepharoplasty



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
PLASTIC SURGEONS®

# What is Eyelid Surgery?

Eyelid surgery, called blepharoplasty, is a surgical procedure to improve the appearance of the eyelids and improve vision when the upper lid skin blocks optimal vision. Surgery can be performed on either the upper lids, lower lids, or both. Whether you want to improve your appearance or are experiencing functional problems with your eyelids, surgery can rejuvenate the area surrounding your eyes and improve vision.

## Specifically, eyelid surgery can treat:

- Loose or sagging skin that creates folds or disturbs the natural contour of the upper eyelid, sometimes impairing vision
- Excess fatty deposits that appear as puffiness in the eyelids
- Bags under the eyes
- Drooping lower eyelids that reveal white below the iris
- Excess skin and fine wrinkles of the lower eyelid

## In general, candidates for eyelid surgery include:

- Healthy individuals who do not have a life-threatening illness or medical conditions that can impair healing
- Non-smokers/vapers
- Individuals with a positive outlook and specific goals in mind for eyelid surgery
- Individuals without serious eye conditions

Remember that the eyelids are part of the face. The appearance of a drooping upper lid may also be due to relaxation of the forehead skin and eyebrow. Sometimes a drooping eyelid is caused by stretching of one of the upper eyelid muscles, the levator. Your plastic surgeon will evaluate your anatomy thoroughly to determine the causes of your eyelid appearance and what procedures might best remedy them.



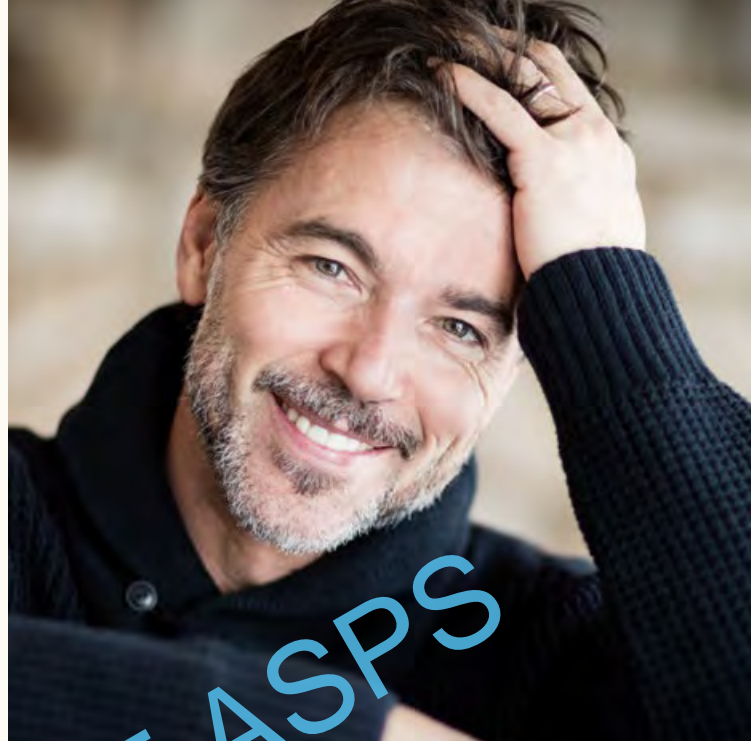
# Consultation & Preparing for Surgery

## Be prepared to discuss the following during your consultation:

- Your surgical goals
- Medical conditions, drug allergies, and previous medical treatments
- Current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco, and drug use
- Previous surgeries

## Your plastic surgeon will also:

- Evaluate your general health status and any pre-existing health conditions or risk factors
- Take photographs
- Discuss your eyelid surgery options
- Recommend a course of treatment
- Discuss likely outcomes of eyelid surgery and any potential risks
- Discuss the type of anesthesia that will be used



**Eyelid surgery may be performed in an accredited outpatient facility or in an ambulatory surgical center or a hospital. Prior to surgery, you may be asked to:**

- Have a physical examination, including lab work
- Take certain medications or adjust your current medications
- Stop smoking or vaping\*
- Avoid taking aspirin and certain anti-inflammatory drugs, as they can increase bleeding
- Arrange for someone to drive you to and from surgery and to stay with you for at least the first night following surgery

*\*Smoking decreases blood flow, which can impede wound healing and increase the risk of infection.*

Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon questions. It's very important to understand all aspects of your eyelid surgery, especially regarding your personal health history. It's natural to feel some anxiety, whether it's excitement for your anticipated new look or a bit of preoperative stress. Don't be shy about discussing these feelings with your plastic surgeon.



# The Procedure

## Step 1 – Anesthesia

Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedure. The choices include intravenous sedation and general anesthesia. Your doctor will recommend the best choice for you.

## Step 2 – The incision

The incision lines for eyelid surgery are designed so the resultant scars will be well concealed within the natural structures of the eyelid region.

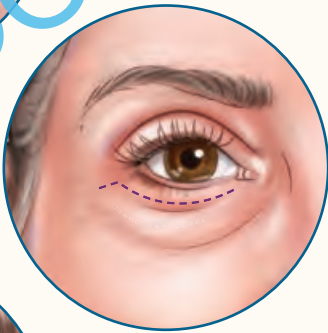
The upper eyelid can be corrected through an incision within the natural crease on the eyelid. This allows for removal or repositioning of fat deposits, tightening of muscles, and removal of excess skin.

Conditions of the lower eyelid may be corrected with an incision just below the lower lash line. Through this incision, excess skin in the lower eyelid is removed.

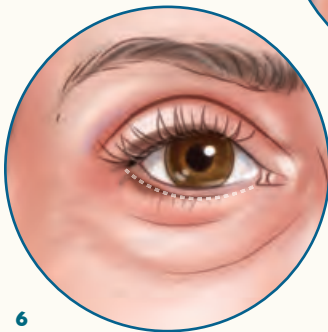
A transconjunctival incision, created on the inside of the lower eyelid, is an alternate technique to correct lower eyelid conditions and redistribute or remove excess fat.



upper  
blepharoplasty  
incision



lower  
blepharoplasty  
incision



transconjunctival  
incision

## Step 3 – Closing the incisions

Eyelid incisions typically are closed with:

- Removable sutures
- Skin adhesive
- Surgical tape

Your surgeon may suggest use of a laser or chemical peel to reduce discoloration of the lower eyelids.

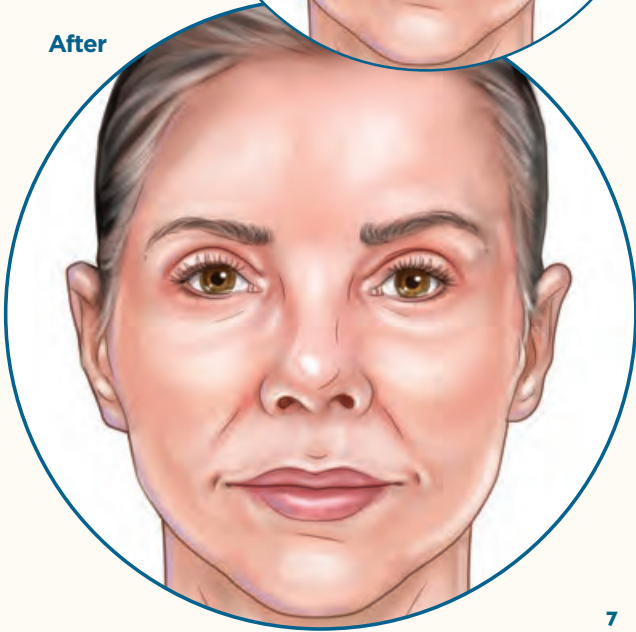
## Step 4 – See the results

The results of eyelid surgery will appear gradually as swelling and bruising subside to reveal a smooth, better-defined eyelid and surrounding region and an alert and rejuvenated appearance.

Before



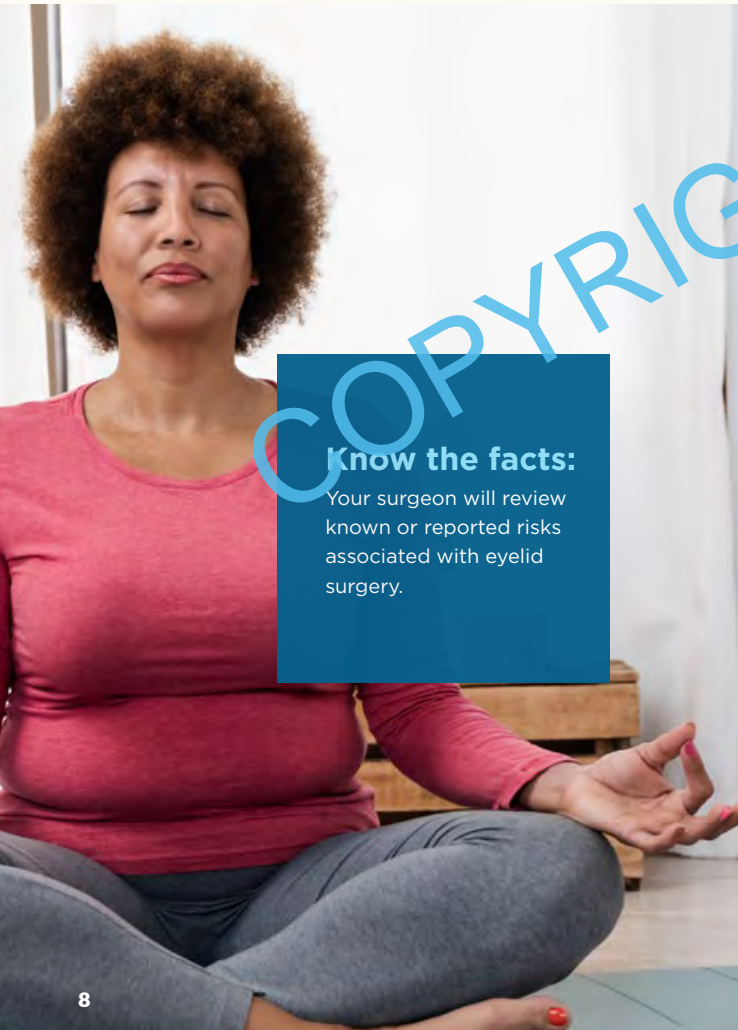
After



# Risks & Safety

The decision to have eyelid surgery is extremely personal. You will have to decide if the benefits will achieve your goals and if the risks and potential complications are acceptable. Your surgeon should review with you the relevant risks for your specific procedure.

You may be asked to sign a consent form to ensure that you fully understand the procedure and any risks and potential complications. You should feel free to ask any questions to help you understand those risks.



## Know the facts:

Your surgeon will review known or reported risks associated with eyelid surgery.

## Risks can include:

- Anesthesia risks
- Swelling and bruising
- Bleeding from the incision lines
- Dryness to the eyes
- Sensitivity to sun or other bright light
- Difficulty closing your eyes
- Ectropion, an outward rolling of the eyelid
- Infection
- Lid lag, a pulling down of the lower eyelid may occur and is often temporary
- Temporary or even permanent change in vision, and very rare chance of blindness
- Changes in skin sensation
- Pain, which may persist
- Poor wound healing
- Possible need for revision surgery
- Unfavorable scarring
- Cornea exposure
- Eyelash loss

All risks will be fully discussed prior to your consent. It is important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon.

## Other important considerations:

Following your physician's instructions is essential to the success of your surgery. It is important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Your doctor will give you specific instructions on how to care for yourself.

# Recovery & Results

After your procedure is completed, lubricating ointment and cold compresses may be applied and in some cases your eyes may be loosely covered with gauze. You will be given specific instructions that may include how to care for your eyes, medications to apply or take orally to aid healing and reduce the potential for infection, specific concerns to look for at the surgical site or in your overall health, and when to follow up with your plastic surgeon.

Initial healing may include some swelling, bruising, irritated or dry eyes, and discomfort that can be controlled with medication, cold compresses, and ointment. Irritation at the incision sites is also possible.

**Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon specific questions about what you can expect during your individual recovery period.**

- Where will I be taken after my surgery is complete?
- What medication will I be given or prescribed after surgery?
- Will I have dressings/bandages after surgery?
- When will they be removed?
- When can I resume normal activity and exercise?
- When do I return for follow-up care?

Recovery Period	What to expect
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Treat pain, swelling and bruising (medication may be required)</li><li>• Significantly limit your activity</li></ul>
Weeks 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to lubricate eyes</li><li>• Begin massage of surgical sites to reduce scarring</li></ul>
Week 4+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full recovery with normal physical activity, and continued scar management</li><li>• Visits with physician as recommended.</li></ul>

## The results of eyelid surgery will be long lasting.

Your final results will appear within several weeks, but it may take up to a year for incision lines to fully refine. While eyelid surgery can be expected to correct certain conditions permanently, you will continue to age naturally.

After swelling and bruising subside, the results of eyelid surgery will reveal a smooth, better-defined eyelid and surrounding region as well as an alert and rejuvenated appearance.

Although good results are expected from your procedure, there is no guarantee. In some situations, it may not be possible to achieve optimal results with a single surgical procedure and another surgery may be necessary.

You must practice diligent sun protection and use darkly tinted sunglasses until the healing process is fully complete.

# Cost

Prices for eyelid surgery can vary. A surgeon's cost may be based on his or her experience, the type of procedure used, and geographic office location.

## Cost may include:

- Anesthesia fees
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Medical tests
- Prescriptions for medication
- Surgeon's fee

Insurance may be applicable with medical documentation of vision impairment from excess skin of the upper eyelid or weak levator muscles in the upper eyelid.

Please ask your surgeon for a complete picture of the costs you can expect for your eyelid surgery. Many plastic surgeons offer patient financing plans.

# Words to know

- **Blepharoplasty:** Eyelid surgery to improve the appearance of upper eyelids, lower eyelids or both.
- **Ectropion:** When the lower eyelid is rolled outward after eyelid surgery; often a temporary condition.
- **General anesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness.
- **Hematoma:** Blood pooling beneath the skin.
- **Intravenous sedation:** Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to help you relax.
- **Local anesthesia:** A drug injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain.
- **Transconjunctival incision:** Incision hidden inside the lower eyelid.
- **Skin resurfacing:** Treatment to improve the texture, clarity, and overall appearance of your skin.
- **Sutures:** Stitches used by surgeons to hold skin and tissue together.

## Your satisfaction involves more than a fee:

When choosing a plastic surgeon for eyelid surgery, remember that the surgeon's experience and your comfort with him or her are just as important as the final cost of the surgery.



# Questions to ask my plastic surgeon

- ☐ Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- ☐ Are you a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons?
- ☐ Were you trained specifically in the field of plastic surgery?
- ☐ How many years of plastic surgery training have you had?
- ☐ Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- ☐ Is the office-based surgical facility accredited by a nationally- or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- ☐ Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- ☐ What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- ☐ Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- ☐ What surgical technique is recommended for me?
- ☐ How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- ☐ What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- ☐ How are complications handled?
- ☐ What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the outcome?
- ☐ Do you have before-and-after photos I can look at for this procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

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# Make the Right Choice

Plastic surgery involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting a member of the **American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)**.

## ASPS member surgeons meet rigorous standards:

- Board certification by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)® or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada\*
- Complete at least six years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of three years of plastic surgery residency training
- Pass comprehensive oral and written exams
- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete continuing medical education, including patient safety each year
- Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified surgical facilities

## Do not be confused by other official-sounding boards and certifications.

The ABPS is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), which has approved medical specialty boards since 1934. There is no ABMS-recognized certifying board with “cosmetic surgery” in its name. By choosing a member of The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, you can be assured that you are choosing a qualified, highly trained plastic surgeon who is board certified by the ABPS or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.





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