

Eyelid Surgery (Blepharoplasty)

Eyelid surgery gives your eyes a fresher, younger more relaxed look by removing excess skin and bags.

Your most important feature

Your eyes are your most important facial feature. They are what people notice first when they meet you and the feature they focus on most. The appearance of our eyes plays a large role in how young, attractive and vital we appear.

Unfortunately, over time, the skin around our eyes creases, muscles weaken, and folds and bags develop. These changes come about for a number of reasons:

- Heredity is an important factor, especially for young or middle aged people noticing changes usually associated with more advanced aging.
- Facial structure can play a role as well. Even slightly under-developed malar and upper jaw bones provide insufficient support to the lower lids. This can lead to lower lid bags and low position of the lid even in younger patients.
- Sunlight and ultraviolet rays damage the area around the eye through their direct effect on the skin and by causing us to squint, which builds up muscle thickness below the eyelashes.
- Finally, normal aging causes stretching of the eyelid skin and leads to excess folds, wrinkles, and sagging of the fat around the eye which appears as bulges in both the upper and lower lids.

By removing excess skin and bags, eyelid surgery (Blepharoplasty) can improve many of these problems. It cannot, however, totally eradicate all eyelid creases. Doing so would create excess tension on the eyelids and result in an overcorrection. Nor can surgery remove laugh lines at the sides of the eyes or malar bags (bulges high on the cheek bones).

Blepharoplasty has evolved significantly in the last 15 years, and mistakes of the past should stay where they belong i.e. in the past.

- In the upper eyelid, attempts to clear very heavy fatty tissue excess has been shown to produce a hollow appearance (doll's eyes), that can make the patient look more tired and is objectionable to most women and men.
- In the lower eyelids, a better understanding of the relationship between the cheek, the rim of the orbit and the eyelid bags, has led surgeons to understand that a youthful appearance does not come from purely removing the bags, but rather from a more complex attempt to reduce volume as well as redrape the tissues over the bony edge. The aim is to restore a smoother contour between the lower eyelid than the cheek, reducing as much as possible the appearance of the circles under the eyes. This also allows us to avoid a hollow appearance of the lower eyelids.

Your consultation: learning more

At your consultation, your surgeon will ask about your general medical history and any previous eyelid surgery. He or she will also ask about any possible thyroid or kidney disease as these can produce swelling of the eyelids, and about any history of eyelid conditions and dryness of the eyes.

Your surgeon will also point out normal differences in facial symmetry you may never have noticed, and describe the results you can expect from your surgery and the positioning of the scars.

It is very important to highlight to your surgeon the elements that you find most objectionable about the appearance of your eyelids and to try to define what you would like to see as an end result.

- Not infrequently, heavy upper eyelids can be significantly corrected using a forehead lift.
- Your surgeon will make clear the kind of changes you can expect from each procedure, as well as its inherent limitations.

New techniques allow for elevation and support of the lateral part of the eyebrow through the upper eyelid procedure. This can combine the benefits of a forehead lift and upper lid blepharoplasty in a smaller procedure.

At the same time, it is now possible to reduce the frown lines between the eyebrows during an upper eyelid blepharoplasty, by directly accessing the muscles that produce the lines and weakening them.

Your operation: what to expect

Eyelid surgery can be performed with local anaesthetic and sedation or under general anaesthetic. It may be done as a day case procedure or it may be done at the same time as a face lift to enhance the results.

The incision for the upper eye surgery is made in the natural crease line approximately one centimeter above your eyelashes and extends a little into the "crow's foot" area at the side of the eye.

- Excess skin is trimmed and any fat in the area at the side of the nose is removed.
- In instances where significant fullness is present in the lateral part of the eyelid, a small amount of fatty tissue is also removed from that area.
- Subsequently, the lid is sutured using most commonly one continuous stitch.

The incision for the lower lid is made just below the eyelashes, and runs out to the natural "laugh line" area.

- Tissues are then elevated and hinged forward and excess fat is partly removed and partly redraped.
- During this operation, a light uplift of the cheek fullness will contribute to a more beautiful appearance of the cheek prominence and eyelid complex.
- Finally, the skin is lifted upwards and outwards, with no tension, and overlapping skin is removed before the incision is closed.

If excess skin is minimal, it is sometimes possible to perform this lower lid surgery without external scars, a procedure known as transconjunctival blepharoplasty.

This allows for contouring of the lower eyelids and circles under the eyes, without leaving external scars. It can be accompanied by resurfacing of the lower eyelid either using chemical peel or laser.

After your surgery

After your surgery you will be advised to take a number of precautions:

- To avoid bleeding, you should not stoop or carry out vigorous activities for five days after your surgery.
- Your eyelids should be gently splashed with water but not rubbed in any way.
- Antibiotic eye ointment should be applied for three or four days and you should not use eye makeup for the first week or two.
- It is important to avoid aspirin after your surgery. Any discomfort around the eyelids may be controlled by mild analgesics such as Paracetamol. You may also find the use of artificial tears helpful in the first few days.
- You will not be able to wear contact lenses for some time after your surgery, so you will want to arrange for glasses to use during this time.
- It is essential that you have large sunglasses to wear after your surgery.

Your stitches will typically be removed three to seven days after your procedure.

Your scars will be pink for some weeks, occasionally months, however they are easily hidden with makeup. Scars in the "crow's feet" area may become lumpy for a while but will invariably flatten in time. This flattening may be helped by gentle massage begun two weeks after your surgery.

Every surgery involves some risks and uncertainties.

- Complications after eyelid surgery are rare and most, including excess tears or abnormal pigmentation of the eyelid skin, are temporary.

- As with any surgery, bleeding and infection can occur. Bleeding might require a return to the operating theatre to avoid damage to the eye. Infection is usually readily treated with antibiotics, extending the course of treatment that you will have received after your surgery.
- Occasionally, what appears to be a transparent sack of fluid develops and covers part of the white of the eye mostly in the outer corner. People who suffer with hay fever may be familiar with this problem as they sometimes notice it during a bad season. While this looks distressing you should not be alarmed as it will settle on its own. During the period when it is settling you need to use eyelid lubricants regularly.
- A scratch on the cornea (the surface of the eye itself) while not serious, can be irritating and may take several days to heal.

Our services

From your first visit to Aesthetic Plastic Surgery's handsome Harley Street offices, you'll work directly with Consultant Plastic, Aesthetic and Reconstructive Surgeon Mr. Lucian Ion, the practice's director.

Together, you'll explore the possibilities and discuss the results you can expect.

Imaging software will be used to show you how you might look after your procedure and every aspect of your treatment, from evaluation through surgery to post surgical care, will be carefully explained.

More Information

Naturally, there will be many questions you will want to ask before making any decisions about undergoing surgery. Also you will wish to meet your Surgeon - having trust and confidence in one's Surgeon is very important.

Surgery is unique to every patient and a detailed discussion and assessment between you and your Consulting Surgeon is essential in enabling you to make a decision based on correct personal information and advice.

Arranging a medical consultation does not obligate you to anything other than attending the appointment. There is no obligation to proceed with treatment. This is entirely a matter for your decision, after the surgeon has decided on the feasibility and accepted you as suitable.

If you would like to know more information we will be happy to answer any queries either by email, letter or telephone, so please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Mr Lucian ION, FRCS

An experienced aesthetic surgeon, Mr. Ion trained in both Europe and the UK. He received his medical degree from the University of Bucharest and started his general and plastic surgical training in Paris where he studied in several prestigious hospitals.

He continued his training in Britain and passed the examinations to become a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. His advanced training in plastic, reconstructive and aesthetic surgery was completed in central London plastic surgery units covering all the aspects of the specialty. This training included a fellowship in aesthetic surgery at The Wellington Hospital in London.

Once his training was complete, Mr. Ion successfully passed both the Intercollegiate Board exam in plastic surgery and the European Board exam in the specialty, and was included on the Register of Medical Specialists of the General Medical Council, under the entry, plastic surgery.

Mr. Ion is a member of the British Association of Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons; the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, and the British Burn Association, as well as an international candidate for the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons.