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Upper and Lower Eyelid Surgery (Blepharoplasty)

Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

Changes in the eyelids are often among the earliest signs of ageing. These may include drooping of the upper eyelids, puffiness, and the development of excess skin.

Patients often notice:

- Heaviness of the upper eyelids
- Smudging of eye makeup due to skin folds
- Puffiness, particularly in the mornings
- “Bags” under the eyes
- In more advanced cases, partial visual obstruction

These changes may be related to ageing, genetics, or recurrent swelling such as allergies.

What is Blepharoplasty?

Blepharoplasty is a surgical procedure designed to improve the appearance of the upper and/or lower eyelids.

The procedure may involve:

- Removal of excess skin
- Removal or repositioning of protruding fat (“bags”)
- Tightening of underlying muscle where necessary

The aim is to restore a more youthful, refreshed appearance to the eyes without altering their natural shape.

Causes of Eyelid Changes

Eyelid ageing occurs due to:

- Loss of skin elasticity

- Weakening of supporting tissues
- Protrusion of fat around the eyes

Some individuals develop these changes earlier due to genetic predisposition, sometimes as early as their twenties. In others, these changes become more noticeable in the thirties, forties, and beyond.

Timing of Surgery

Early intervention often produces the best results.

When eyelid laxity becomes severe, or when there is visual obstruction, surgical correction may become more complex. Early treatment allows for more predictable outcomes and less extensive surgical adjustment.

The Procedure

Blepharoplasty may be performed under local or general anaesthesia.

- Upper eyelid surgery involves removal of excess skin and fat
- Lower eyelid surgery focuses on removing or repositioning fat and tightening skin

Incisions are carefully placed within natural skin folds or fine lines to minimise visible scarring.

The shape of the eye is not altered in routine cases.

Scars

Incisions are positioned so that scars are well concealed.

Initially, scars may appear as fine red lines near the eyelids. Over time, these fade and blend into the natural skin creases, becoming minimally visible.

Recovery

- Hospital stay: usually 1 day
- Sutures are removed after 3–4 days
- Initial recovery: approximately 5–7 days
- Swelling and bruising improve gradually over 1–2 weeks

Most patients return to normal daily activities within a week, although minor swelling may persist for longer.

Results

Blepharoplasty can provide a more youthful, rested appearance.

Once fatty tissue “bags” are removed, they generally do not return. However, the natural ageing process will continue over time.

The procedure can be performed alone or in combination with other facial procedures.

Risks and Complications

All surgical procedures carry some risk. Possible complications include:

- Bruising and swelling
- Infection (rare)
- Bleeding
- Delayed healing
- Scarring
- Prolonged swelling or discoloration
- Temporary or rarely permanent changes in eyelid sensation
- Dry eyes or irritation

Serious complications are uncommon, and risks are similar to other minor surgical procedures.

Important Considerations

Patients should understand that:

- The goal is improvement, not perfection
- Mild asymmetry may persist
- Healing varies between individuals
- Final results improve over several months

Your surgeon will discuss your specific goals and suitability during consultation.