Esthetic Eyelid Surgery

The goal is to still look like you. Just better!!!

The eyes will appear more vibrant after cosmetic eyelid surgery. Often results are so natural friends will comment on how great you look, without realizing surgery was performed. The incision for blepharoplasty is hidden in natural creases of the eyelid, or the inside surface of the lid.

Picture on left shows upper eyelid overhanging, lose skin and fat tissue prolapse which are the main cause of upper eyelid bags. Right picture show the postoperative result after upper eyelid blefaroplasty. Excess skin and fat are carefully removed during surgery, a refreshed more vibrant appearance is obvious.
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Left picture shows upper and lower eyelid bags causing a tired, unhealthy, sad facial expression. Right picture demonstrates pleasant surgical results after blepharoplasty.

Goal in upper eyelid blepharoplasty is to remove eyelid-bulging fat pads as well as loose extra skin that causes an aged, sad, droopy, tired and unhealthy appearance. A thin skin incision is made at the eyelid crease, a natural skin fold; this disguises and minimizes the scar allowing a perfect healing. Two fat pads are identified and removed in a very careful gentle manner, overhanging extra skin is then surgically resected. The natural eyelid crease position is reestablished and the skin is sutured with very fine threads that would be removed about a week later.
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Goal in lower eyelid blepharoplasty is to remove the excess fat tissue that bulges out pushing the lid. When needed, moderate extra skin resection is also performed to improve lid appearance and diminish wrinkles and crow’s feet lines. The initial skin incision is made at the base of the eyelashes in order to hide it and give a better cosmetic acceptance. In order to avoid eyelid retraction and ectropion only moderate skin resection is performed. Aggressive overhanging skin resection should always be avoided. Often a lower eyelid tightening (canthoplasty) is performed to avoid lid retraction after surgery.

Lower eyelid blepharoplasty can also be performed through the inside of the lid. This procedure is known as Transcojunctival blepharoplasty. The approach assures an invisible scar, yet excellent cosmetic results since fat pads can be removed perfectly using this route. Overhanging loose skin cannot be removed; therefore the procedure is ideal for patients with moderate to mild skin laxity. Mildly loose skin shrinks on itself allowing superb cosmetic results for most patients.
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Left hand picture demonstrates an obvious lower eyelid bag, right hand picture shows surgical result after transconjunctival (inside-of-the-lid) fat pad removal.
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Lower eyelid bags caused by eyelid sagging and fat protrusion as well as skin laxity. Left hand picture shows obvious bags under the eyes, right hand picture shows result after surgery. Fat tissue is carefully removed through the inside-of-the-lid. Resulting in an invisible scar and total removal of fat pads and subtle rejuvenation of lids and face.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do the eyelids become baggy?
Sun damage, smoking, stretching from swelling or obesity, "wear and tear" from blinking and rubbing, age-related loss of elasticity, and heredity all contribute to changes in the eyelid skin, muscle, fat, and support system.
Is there a "perfect age" for blepharoplasty?
Since eyelid skin is much thinner than that on the rest of the face, the eyes are usually the first facial component to demonstrate a deterioration and loss of attractiveness. A person is ready for blepharoplasty whenever the effects of Mother Nature or Father Time bother him or her enough that an improvement is desired.

How long does cosmetic eye surgery take?
As blepharoplasty is not a "stock" procedure, operating times will vary. As a general guideline, however, performing upper or lower eyelid surgery alone usually takes about 45 minutes, while having them both performed together takes about 1 hour 15 minutes.

What type of anesthesia is used?
Most people report minimal discomfort during blepharoplasty performed under local anesthesia with sedation. Compared to general anesthesia, local anesthesia is associated with less bleeding during eyelid lift surgery, enhanced precision, faster recovery, increased safety, and more predictable results.

Does Doctor Piva uses the laser?
Compared to a stainless steel scalpel, use of the carbon dioxide laser in eyelid surgery has been associated with increased collateral tissue damage, delayed healing, increased scarring, less precision, and higher cost. Advertised claims of less bruising and a more rapid recovery have not been validated by recent unbiased studies.

Can bulging fat be removed by liposuction?
No. The internal tissues are too delicate. Besides, fat removal is no longer a major part of modern cosmetic eyelid surgery.

Is there much discomfort after surgery?
The majority of patients report mild aching or burning, which is usually well controlled with the use of Tylenol and cold compresses.

How long does the swelling last?
Swelling peaks on the morning after surgery and mostly resolves over the next 7 to 10 days. A small amount, however, may persist for several months.

How noticeable is the bruising?
Although variable, most people experience moderate discoloration that begins to fade soon after surgery and is mostly gone by 7-10 days.

How long do I need to be off work?
Most normal activities may be resumed within two days. Strenuous activity should be avoided for at least one week. Most people prefer to "lay low" for about ten days.

Are the scars very noticeable?
In the upper eyelid, the incision line is hidden in the eyelid crease. In most cases, the lower eyelid incision is placed along the back of the eyelid and leaves no external scar. While full thinning and whitening of any scar on the body may take six months or more, eyelid keloids and rough scars are rare.

Do many men undergo cosmetic eyelid surgery?
Puffy eyelids look just as bad on a man as they do on a woman. In today's competitive and youth-oriented world of business, both men and women have come to appreciate that while they may be well-qualified, they also "post their resumes" on their faces.

My lids are not baggy but hollow. Can this be helped?
Sometimes, although not by standard blepharoplasty. Oculoplastic surgeons do have options to help you.

Can dark circles beneath the eyes be corrected by lower blepharoplasty?
No. Most such depressions are caused by a deficiency of soft tissue and/or bone along the upper cheek and are not truly an eyelid problem. While blepharoplasty, fat repositioning, and eyelid chemical peel may help to soften their appearance in selected cases, it will not eliminate them. Different surgery would have to be planned for such cases.
I’ve had or plan to have LASIK. Is this a problem?
No, although there are timing considerations.

I visited a doctor to ask about surgery on my upper eyelids but was told I needed a forehead lift instead. Do the two procedures yield the same result?
No. A brow or forehead lift (in reality, an upper face lift) does not substitute for an eyelid lift, and vice versa. Each operation is directed at a different problem and achieves a different outcome. When indicated by the patient's condition, the two procedures may sometimes be performed simultaneously.

Unless there is clear evidence that the forehead has actually drooped, however, conservatism is wise when considering a lift. The highly arched and elevated brow so popular during the 1950s (then a product of eyebrow plucking and pencil) is now not only considered a dated look but also a give-away that one has undergone cosmetic surgery. Today's stylish young adults do not sport highly elevated brows (examine the models in any fashion magazine or a photo of yourself at age twenty).

When indicated, a forehead lift can be an excellent procedure to combat the effect of true upper face descent, but it is does not duplicate the improvement obtained from a well-done upper eyelid lift, or blepharoplasty.

How precise is the result?
No surgeon is perfect, no wound heals perfectly, no patient possesses perfect pre-existing anatomy, and some operations work better on one patient than on the next. A realistic expectation is that you should achieve about a 75-90% improvement in the upper eyelids and a 60-80% improvement in the lower eyelids. Some final asymmetry is the rule rather than the exception.

How long does the improvement last?
In contrast to procedures designed to fight gravity (facelift, brow lift, etc.), blepharoplasty lasts a long time. In the large majority of patients, cosmetic eyelid surgery needs to be performed only once.

Is Doctor Piva Board-Certified in plastic surgeon?
No. Dr. Piva is a Certified ophthalmologist who is formally trained in the advanced subspecialty of ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery (also known as "oculoplastic surgery"). Dr. Piva has the unique advantage of also been trained in neurosurgery, therefore his surgical skills are an added bonus when dealing with complex clinical and surgical situations, as well as for more simple daily procedures.