

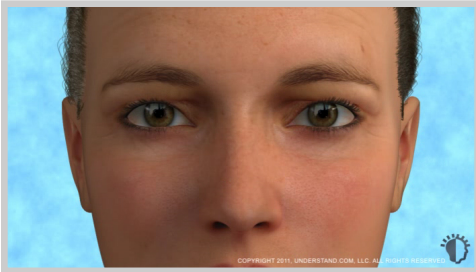
Eyelid Surgery - Upper

Your eyes are one of your most expressive facial features, but are they expressing sadness or fatigue rather than your inner vitality? Are your eyes making you look older than you feel? The aging process, heredity, skin type and environmental factors, such as sun damage, can cause the eyelids to sag and droop or become puffy and heavy, making you appear sad, tired or older than you feel. Eyelid surgery, also known as blepharoplasty, may be performed on the upper eyelids, the lower eyelids, or both.

Depending on your specific needs, your surgeon may also suggest a brow lift to improve your upper eyelids.

This animation describes upper eyelid blepharoplasty, which can reduce the appearance of heavy and sagging upper eyelids.



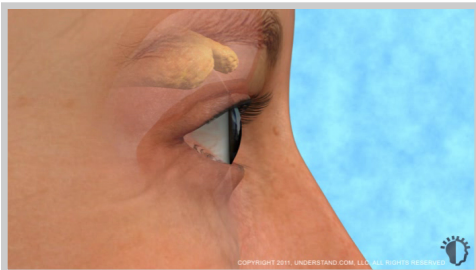


Introduction

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What Causes Eyelids to Change?

The skin on your upper eyelid is among the thinnest anywhere on the body. A layer of muscle is located just beneath the eyelid skin and is separated from fatty tissue by a thin tissue membrane, called the orbital septum. Muscle layers and the orbital septum weaken and sag with age, and fat deposits shift in response to weakened muscles, causing puffiness and drooping.

In addition, changes occur in the skin itself. The collagen and elastin that provide support to the skin, break down over time, causing the skin to lose elasticity and become lax. Additionally, eyebrows may droop with age, causing the upper eyelids to sag.



How Upper Eyelid Surgery Works

Upper eyelid blepharoplasty typically involves removing or redistributing fat deposits, as well as removing excess skin and muscle to improve the contour of the upper eyes.



Preparation

The blepharoplasty procedure will most likely be performed under local anesthesia with sedation, in which the eyelids and surrounding areas are numb and you are relaxed but may not be asleep. Alternatively, you may be given general anesthesia, which causes you to sleep during the procedure. Incision guidelines may be drawn to ensure that the incisions follow the natural contours of the upper eyelid and the resulting scars will be as inconspicuous as possible.



Procedure

Your surgeon will make an incision in the fold of the upper eyelid and carefully remove a predetermined amount of excess skin.

In some instances a small strip of muscle will be removed as well. In order to gain access to the fat deposits, a small incision will be made in the orbital septum and your surgeon will reposition or remove a portion of the fat, which reduces the puffy appearance. To conclude the procedure, the incisions will be closed with absorbable or non-absorbable sutures and a lubricating ointment and small bandages may be applied to your eyelids.



Recovery and Results

You may experience some pain, bruising, and swelling after the procedure, and your physician will likely recommend cold compresses or pain medication to help make you as comfortable as possible.

You should avoid strenuous activity, such as heavy lifting or exercise, as recommended by your doctor, to allow your body sufficient time to heal. If absorbable sutures were used, they do not need to be removed and will dissolve on their own.

Any non-absorbable sutures are typically removed in about a week, and you will begin to notice an improvement in the bruising around your eyes. Upper eyelid surgery will not stop your eyes from aging, but the results are usually very long-lasting and will brighten your eyes to the rested, youthful appearance you desire.