The Guide to Blepharoplasty (Eyelid Tuck)
REFRESH YOUR APPEARANCE

The eyes have a dramatic impact on appearance and can let others know how we feel – whether we are happy, sad, angry, or tired. They are one of the first things we notice and they have a great deal to do with how others perceive us as they glance at our facial features. Eyes with excessive or sagging skin are frequently associated with a perception of old age (even when they occur in a young person) and tiredness.

Unfortunately the eyes are often one of the first areas on the face to show telltale signs of aging. Over time, the eyelids may begin to droop and sag. Bags can form under the eyelids making it hard to feel alive and vibrant. The loose skin over your eyes and the fat bags under your eyes may be making you look more tired and older than you feel inside.

Cosmetic eyelid surgery, or blepharoplasty, is an operation (actually, a set of operations) for your eyelids designed to maintain the appearance of your eyes. Surgery of the eyelids, blepharoplasty upper and lower, can correct sagging eyelids, remove fatty pouches beneath the eyes and remove excess skin from the upper eyelids.

The result is a brighter, more alert, and rested appearance.

Saskatoon-based ophthalmologist Dr. M. Ronan Conlon is a recognized oculoplastic surgeon who specializes in blepharoplasty. Since establishing his clinic in 1994, he has conducted over 20,000 surgeries and has strived to offer innovative procedures to help treat a range of eye concerns. The “vision” behind his practice has been to help patients take a direct approach to their eye care.
WHAT IS AN EYELID TUCK (BLEPHAROPLASTY)

Blepharoplasty is an operation performed on the eyelids (upper, lower or both) which involves the removal of skin and soft tissue, resulting in a fresher more youthful appearance to the eyes and entire face.

The blepharoplasty procedure is done to reduce the heaviness around the eyes. This can be associated with skin, fat, and muscle excess both to the upper and lower eyelids leaving patients with a tired appearance even though may feel well rested.

Blepharoplasty is often done as an elective surgery for cosmetic reasons. Lower eyelid blepharoplasty seeks to improve puffy lower eyelid “bags” and reduce the wrinkling of skin.

Blepharoplasty is sometimes needed for functional reasons. When an advanced amount of upper eyelid skin is present, the skin may protrude over the eyelashes and causes a loss of peripheral vision. The outer and upper parts of the visual field are most commonly affected and the condition may cause difficulty with activities such as driving or reading. In this circumstance, upper eyelid blepharoplasty is performed to improve peripheral vision.
HOW IS EYELID BLEPHAROPLASTY PERFORMED?

The surgery is performed under local anesthesia. Because of the facial anatomy changes from one individual to another there is not one procedure that suits every individual. Each operation is customized to suit the individual’s anatomy and the desires of the individual. In general terms, the following principles apply to blepharoplasty surgery.

For upper eyelid surgery, the incision is made in the natural skin fold. Excess skin is removed and a conservative amount of orbicularis muscle is removed. Although it is traditionally advocated to remove eyelid fat during the blepharoplasty procedure, Dr. Conlon believes that in many cases the fat can be repositioned and contoured as opposed to completely removed. This more modern approach to blepharoplasty leaves the eyelids looking more youthful and avoids the hollowed sunken surgical look of years gone by.

For lower eyelid surgery, Dr. Conlon favors making an incision on the inside of the eyelid (transconjunctival) to avoid a scar below the lashes. Through this incision fat tissue is removed as required. If excess skin removal is required this can often be accomplished by a well concealed incision placed laterally. The skin is closed with very fine sutures.
WHO IS A CANDIDATE FOR BLEPHAROPLASTY?

Do you look tired even though you aren’t? Is the skin of your upper eyelid overhanging the normal lid crease and starting to impinge on the eyelashes? Are there bulges and bags where there shouldn’t be? Do your eyes appear smaller than they did in years past? If you have answered yes to any of these questions you might be a good candidate for blepharoplasty.

The best way to determine if you are a good candidate for an eyelid tuck is to book a consultation with Dr. Conlon. Dr. Conlon will make sure that you are a suitable candidate for surgery at the time of your consultation.

The ideal candidate for a blepharoplasty is someone who has developed noticeable pockets of fat in the lower lids, or excessive, redundant skin in the upper lids. Anyone with signs of aging in the upper or lower lids may benefit from blepharoplasty.

Blepharoplasty may be also be used to improve sight by removing excess skin out of the patient’s field of vision.
Eyelid blepharoplasty can make a remarkable difference in the appearance of your face, alleviating the appearance of tiredness and old age. Your eyes appear fresher and more youthful and these results may last for many years. The degree of improvement varies from patient to patient.
BEFORE AND AFTER
SEE HOW THEY COMPARE

BEFORE

AFTER

BILATERAL LOWER EYELID BLEPHAROPLASTY WITH TRANSCONJUNCTIVAL REMOVAL OF FAT PADS.

BEFORE

AFTER

UPPER EYELID BLEPHAROPLASTY. CO2 LASER LOWER EYELIDS.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE CONSULTATION?

Dr. Conlon will discuss the degree of change you would notice in your appearance. The procedure and its risks and limitations will be explained to you. Your medical history will be reviewed and then he will examine the skin and fat around your eyes. Your eye sight, peripheral vision and tear ducts might be checked if necessary.

HOW LONG DOES THE SURGERY TAKE?

The procedure general takes 30-60 minutes depending on whether upper or lower eyelids are done.

WHAT WILL I FEEL DURING THE PROCEDURE?

Initially you may feel a tight sensation around the eyes, with minor discomfort that lasts for a day or two. A mild pain reliever can be taken as needed. People who have had the procedure are often surprised at how painless eyelid surgery can be.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER SURGERY?

You will be given an instruction sheet to take home with you, which will outline the steps you should take to care for your eyelids after surgery. The first evening after surgery, you should rest quietly with your head elevated. Cold compresses are to be used as per the instruction sheet provided.

WHAT IS THE RECOVERY PERIOD LIKE?

At first the incisions will probably be red and somewhat bumpy. Eventually the resulting scar should become flat and inconspicuous. The swelling and discoloration around your eyes will gradually subside, and you will start to look and feel better each day. Swelling and bruising varies considerably from person to person.

Bruising typically disappears within 7-10 days. After the first week you will be permitted to use makeup, if desired, to conceal any discoloration. Your vision might be blurry for a few days. Your eyes may be temporarily sensitive to light, and you may experience excess tearing or dryness. You need to avoid wearing contact lenses for the first week. You might also consider wearing dark sunglasses for a couple of weeks to protect your eyes from wind and sun irritation. The eyes may tire easily for several weeks.
HOW LONG DOES THE SURGERY LAST?

Following blepharoplasty surgery the face will have a more youthful appearance and in many cases the eyelids feel less heavy. The results generally last 10 to 15 years and the surgery usually does not need to be repeated.

HOW PRECISE IS THE RESULT?

There is no such thing as a perfect operation and no surgeon is perfect. No individual has perfect pre-existing anatomy and no skin wound heals without some degree of scarring. A mild degree of asymmetry between eyelids is the rule, rather than the exception. A realistic expectation from the surgery would be an 80% improvement in the upper eyelid appearance and a 70% improvement in the lower eyelid appearance.

DOES HEALTH CARE PAY FOR BLEPHAROPLASTY?

Health care does not typically cover cosmetic blepharoplasty. Health care will cover a functional blepharoplasty if the cases where the skin impedes the visual axis.

HOW MUCH DOES THE PROCEDURE COST?

The cost for blepharoplasty is $3500 for the upper eyelids and $3500 the lower eyelids. The cost for both the upper and lower eyelids is $5000.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF BLEPHAROPLASTY?

Significant complications from upper or lower eyelid surgery are infrequent. As with any surgical procedure, however, there is always a possibility of infection or reaction to the anesthesia.

Temporary problems such as excessive tearing, decreased sensation in the eyelid, dryness, burning, stinging, and gritty sensation of the eye(s) are helped with eye drops and time. Prominence or firmness of the scars, asymmetry in healing or scarring, milia or whiteheads where the sutures emanate from the skin and difficulty closing the eyes completely is common with minor surgery. Bleeding behind the eye is extremely rare but could cause visual loss. This presents as severe prolonged pain after surgery and should be dealt with immediately.

You can help minimize certain risks by following the advice and instructions of your surgeon, both before and after your eyelid surgery. Pre-existing conditions can also put you at risk, including thyroid problems, insufficient tear production or dryness of the eye, elevated blood pressure, circulatory disorders, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. If you have any of these conditions, discuss with your surgeon before proceeding with this procedure.
ABOUT THE CONLON EYE INSTITUTE

The Conlon Eye Institute is a state-of-the-art medical and surgical ophthalmological facility located within the Medical Arts Building in Saskatoon. Founded by Dr. M. Ronan Conlon, the Conlon Eye Institute specializes in refractive laser surgery, cataract surgery, implantable contact lenses and eyelid surgery.

The Conlon Eye Institute is equipped with cutting edge diagnostic and therapeutic equipment, including Optical Coherence Tomography, Visante Omni OCT, Corneal Microscopy, Humphrey Visual Field Analyzer, Digital Fundus Photography, IOL Master Biometry, Corneal Topography, and Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty. The facility meticulously adheres with the standards recommended by the Canadian Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgical Facilities (CAAASF) as a non-hospital based surgical facility. Our Surgical Suite meets the highest quality norms, and is also accredited by the CAAASF.

DR. M. RONAN CONLON

Dr. M. Ronan Conlon has been practicing ophthalmology in Saskatoon since 1994. His special interests in ophthalmology include laser refractive surgery, cataract surgery, oculoplastic surgery and implantable contact lenses. He regularly performs routine and complex cataract surgery, astigmatism correction, custom cataract surgery and refractive laser surgery. With subspecialty training in oculoplastic surgery he also has considerable expertise in cosmetic and reconstructive eyelid surgery.

Dr. Conlon completed his residency training in ophthalmology at the University of Western Ontario in 1991. Dr. Conlon has completed 3 years of fellowship training in ophthalmology; one year at Harvard University (1991-1992) and two years at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics (1992-1994). Dr. Conlon first began performing PRK and LASIK surgery in 1995, and was one of the founding refractive surgeons at Horizon Laser Vision Center.
BOOK YOUR CONSULTATION TODAY

Making the decision to undergo eye or eyelid surgery is not to be taken lightly. Like any medical procedure, you want to be sure the team entrusted to your care is experienced, professional and attentive. As a client of the Conlon Eye Institute that’s exactly what you can expect - regardless of what procedure you choose.

The best way to find out if you are a candidate for blepharoplasty is to book a consultation with Dr. Conlon. Dr. Conlon will recommend a specific treatment plan that best meets your needs, depending on the unique physical characteristics of your eyes, and your specific visual needs.

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