

Mao Facial Plastic Surgery

Blepharoplasty

Blepharoplasty is a common plastic surgery procedure. It can significantly improve your facial appearance, giving a refreshed look. As we age, the skin around our eyes in particular becomes loose, and begins to sag. Excess skin on the upper lid may actually interfere with your vision and the application of eyeliner and mascara. It can also contribute to a tired, sad or angry look. Upper lid blepharoplasty is a procedure which removes excess skin, and, sometimes, excess fat over the eyes in order to restore a youthful eyelid contour. Lower lid blepharoplasty can accomplish similar results. Occasionally, upper lid blepharoplasty can be done to improve your peripheral vision. This requires a special eye test done by an ophthalmologist.

Good candidates for this procedure are healthy, and have realistic expectations. There is a fine balance between a natural looking improvement, and a hollowed out appearance. We can help you achieve a drastic improvement in the appearance of your eyes without a surgical look.

Blepharoplasty usually takes one hour for the upper lids, and one hour for the lower lids. They can be done together if indicated. The incisions are hidden in the upper lid crease and, for the lower lid, just below the eyelashes. Occasionally, the lower lids can be improved without any external incisions or scars. The procedure is done in an outpatient surgery center with some sedation or in the office with a local anesthetic. Either way, you will be able to go home the same day. Recovery time is usually two weeks. You will be feeling well within the first few days, but bruising and swelling may last up to two weeks.

The following information serves as a guide for what to expect should you wish to proceed. Please try to follow these instructions as best as you can. Failure to do so may jeopardize your final result.

Before Surgery

1. Only take Extra Strength Tylenol® for aches and pains, starting at least 3 weeks before surgery. It is very important NOT to use any aspirin, aspirin-containing compounds or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (i.e. ibuprofen, Motrin®, Advil®, Aleve®, Celebrex®, etc). These all work by thinning your blood, and can cause increased bleeding during surgery and increased bruising after surgery.
2. Do not take vitamin E supplements, fish oils, omega-3 supplements, or herbal supplements such as garlic, ginkgo, or ginseng for at least 3 weeks prior to surgery. These supplements may also increase the likelihood of bleeding and bruising. A prepackaged multivitamin product (such as One-A-Day or Centrum) is fine, but do not add any of the above supplements.
3. If you are on a blood thinner like Coumadin® (warfarin) you must let surgeon know, and he/she will have you speak to your primary care doctor about managing this prior to your surgery.
4. Avoid alcoholic beverages the night before surgery.
5. You may be taking pain medicine after your surgery. Your surgeon will write both prescriptions for you, or they will be called into your pharmacy by the office. You will also receive a prescription for a special ophthalmic antibiotic ointment, which you will use over your stitches after the surgery.
6. Drinking one glass of pineapple or blueberry juice each day for two weeks before surgery may help to decrease bruising.
7. If you wear contact lenses, do not wear them the day of surgery- wear your glasses instead. You will be able to wear your contact lenses after surgery, however, you may need to wear your glasses one week after surgery because of the swelling in your eyes.
8. You should not smoke or use nicotine substitutes for one month prior to surgery. Smoking cigarettes and/or using nicotine substitutes impairs healing, may cause postoperative complications, and may affect your postoperative results.

During Surgery

You will come into the office or the surgery center the morning of your surgery, depending on what procedure you are having done. For both places, you will need someone to drive you home. If you have the procedure done in the office, you can expect to be here for approximately one hour. If you have your surgery in the outpatient surgery center, you will go home approximately one to two hours after your surgery is completed. If you had upper lid blepharoplasty, there will be stitches across your upper eyelids, and you will have small pieces of tape around the area. Please try to keep these pieces of tape dry during the next week. If you had lower lid blepharoplasty, there will be dissolvable stitches at the incision line. It is okay if these stitches get wet.

After Surgery

1. You should expect swelling and bruising around your eyes after surgery. Sleeping with your head elevated on at least three pillows for one week after surgery will help to minimize bruising and swelling. Avoid bending over or lifting heavy objects for at least one week after surgery.
2. Keep ice packs over your eyes for the first 24 hours after surgery to help reduce swelling and bruising. (If you had upper lid surgery, remember to keep the tape around your eyes dry.)
3. Take your pain medicine and antibiotics as directed. Extra Strength Tylenol may be enough for your pain after the first few days.
4. Do not exercise, do any heavy lifting or bending over for the first week.
5. You may shower after the second postoperative day. If you have an upper lid blepharoplasty, you will need to keep the pieces of tape around the stitches dry. Try to keep your face dry in the shower, and wash your face using makeup remover pads or a washcloth. If you have a lower lid blepharoplasty, you will have dissolvable stitches. If you only have a lower lid blepharoplasty, it is okay to shower and get these stitches wet.
6. You should apply the antibiotic ointment over the stitches twice a day for the first week. This will help keep the area moist, decrease scab formation, and improve your healing.
7. Your vision may be slightly blurry the first night because of protective ointment placed in your eye during the surgery. If you have any significant vision change, contact your surgeon's office immediately.
8. You should not smoke or use nicotine substitutes for one month after surgery. Smoking cigarettes and/or using nicotine substitutes impairs healing, may cause postoperative complications, and may affect your postoperative results.

POSTOPERATIVE VISITS

Upper Lid Blepharoplasty

You will need to see your surgeon again one week after surgery. At that time, the upper eyelid stitches and tape will be removed. You should apply the antibiotic for one more day after this. It is okay to shower at this time, but you must be very gentle and not rub your eyes. Gently wash your face with a mild soap, and pat the area dry.

Lower Lid Blepharoplasty

If you had only a lower lid blepharoplasty, the stitches will begin to dissolve over the first week. Small pieces of the stitches may come off while you are applying the antibiotic ointment – this is normal.

Your incisions will be red for up to one month after surgery. It is okay to start using makeup ten days after surgery (approximately three days after the stitches have been removed). It is a good idea to buy new makeup, to minimize the amount of bacteria and decrease your risk of infection. Your incisions will start to fade over the next few weeks. They should be completely healed within one month.

If you wear contact lenses, you may start using them again one week after surgery. We recommend that you wear your glasses for the first week. The contact lenses themselves do not injure anything, but manipulating your eyelids in order to place the lenses in your eye may adversely affect the healing of your incisions.

If at any point you have any questions or concerns, particularly about change in your vision, you must contact your surgeon's office immediately.