



## **Care Instructions: Eyelid Surgery (Blepharoplasty)**

### **General**

The upper eyelids tend to develop excess or lax skin that can hang over or down to the lash line. The inability to see the upper eyelid above the lashes and skin crease can be a sign of aging and tiredness. Blepharoplasty is a procedure to remove the excess skin, and give an alert, younger, less tired appearance. The lower eyelids can be creased and wrinkled with age as well, and the skin can be tightened with lower lid blepharoplasty. Here too we like to tighten the remaining skin with a chemical peel or laser. The dark circles or creases from the lower eyelid to upper cheek also need to be blended, and filler or fat grafting, or other repositioning will address this. Again, both surgical and non-surgical options are available, and at times used in combination. Treatment (Latisse) for longer eyelashes is also possible. Some differences from one eye to the other can be present, or the eyeball itself can look more or less prominent than desired. These positional changes and relationships can also be addressed (and may involve bone alteration), to meet your goals, and create an aesthetic eye.

These instructions are intended for **Eyelid surgery (blepharoplasty)**, with or without ***fat grafting to the tear troughs, chemical peel to the lower eyelids, botox to region or forehead, and brow lift***. If you are also having a facelift and necklift, please see those instructions.

**Imaging and 3D:** We will take several regular photographs at several different angles. As you enter your first visit we have you sign a consent for these photos and their uses. We have a 3D camera machine (photographic, NOT X-ray), that we will use to capture an image of your existing appearance. Evaluating this from many angles enables a clear picture of areas of balance and imbalance, and the proportions relative to your face. The 3D camera has several limitations relating to eyelid only surgery. The eyeball is obscured in the 3D photo, and we cannot simulate or represent well the true effect of skin excess removal from the upper or lower lid. We can, to some extent, show the effect of skin tightening, and dark circle treatment. We will show you many before and after examples and point you to our sources where you can review these images at your leisure as well.

**Factors that influence healing and time to see the ultimate result:** There are several factors that influence the final result. First, in all cases there is swelling and bruising. The eyelids (periobital region) can be bruised for a few weeks. The majority of the swelling is resolved by 2 weeks, but occasionally there can still be some that continues to go down. Additionally, the bruising is usually gone by 2 weeks as well, but in rare cases can persist longer, or some of the pigments of bruising linger. This is especially true in folks on certain medications or with underlying bleeding problems. Another consideration is the Scar. All scars are red and more obvious early and progressively fade with time. The eyelid scars are hidden in existing creases and once healed are not noticeable. After 2 weeks, you can wear gentle eyelid makeup to help conceal the healing scar as well. Scar care will be important, and patience during the healing process. Please let us know if you have dry eyes, have had prior eyelid procedures, or difficulty with peripheral vision.



Having past trauma and scars to the skin can healing jeopardize healing and appearance. Some people develop thicker scarring (or fibrosis) underneath the skin that may lessen the shapeliness. We utilize several techniques to try and avoid this, but healing potential is intrinsic to one's own genetics and cannot always be altered.

Secondary procedures (if you've had a prior eyelid surgery) can be more challenging; and not as predictable, given the scarring, altered perfusion to tissues.

Smoking, diabetes, history of infections (nasal, skin, sinuses), and other conditions can potentially alter your healing. If you are excessively preoccupied appearance, we may have you take a brief survey and have discussions with some of our collaborators prior to deciding on surgery as well.

### **General Pre-operative information**

**Medical history:** Please inform us of any major medical problems. We will perform a history and physical but in some cases a clearance from your other specialists, and our anesthesia department may be required. Please inform us of any auto-immune problems, diabetes, healing problems, bleeding problems, bone disorders (e.g., osteoporosis or osteopenia), or respiratory problems, sleep apnea/snoring. Please let us know if you have **high blood pressure** or heart conditions, or past surgery or issues with your eyes.

**Medications:** **NO blood thinners – no aspirin, NSAIDS, ibuprofen, or similar medications BEFORE SURGERY.** Do NOT take these prior to surgery. These can increase bleeding. Please do NOT take these for at least 2 weeks prior to surgery. If your primary doctor has you on these for a specific reason we will coordinate with you and them. We will screen your medication list. We may give you NSAIDS, specifically ibuprofen after surgery, but please do not take prior to surgery. We may give you a medication to decrease your blood pressure – if it tends to run high.

**Pre-Anesthesia Testing. (PAT).** In certain circumstances you will need to meet a member of our anesthesia staff prior to surgery. Also, certain tests, such as an EKG, and labs may be obtained prior to surgery. A clearance from your primary doctor and modification of your existing medication schedule may be required. If you are young, healthy, with no medical problems and few medications this might not apply to you.

**Foods / Supplements to Avoid Prior to surgery:** Avoid onion, garlic, tomatoes, and ginseng, or other herbal supplements prior to surgery. Avoid fish oil. Avoid herbal teas (green tea is good/fine). (Arnica and pineapple juice are both good preoperatively).

**Smoking:** **Do NOT smoke for 4 months before and 4 months after surgery.** Smoking will decrease your ability to heal and will increase your risk for infection. Also, the heat and sucking in of hot smoke can have ill-effects on your lips (that we may have adjusted surgically).

**General care and washing prior to surgery:** Please remove nail polish or nail gel before surgery. Male patients should shave their face prior to the procedure (morning of or night before).



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## PREPARING FOR THE DAY OF SURGERY

You will receive a phone call from our office letting you know you what time you should arrive for surgery. Our nursing staff will be in touch to review questions and medications as well. If you ever have additional questions please email or call 203-453-6635

The day of surgery, plan to arrive 1-2 hours prior to the scheduled start time. A member of the surgical team will reach out to confirm the time of arrival with you the day or two before. Please contact Remember: **NO FOOD OR DRINK AFTER 12 MID-NIGHT THE NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY.** You and your family will meet with the nursing, anesthesia, and surgical team members. We will answer any final questions. **Tell us / anesthesia if you have a history of motion sickness** or nausea with anesthesia; please tell the anesthesia team – we take several measures to reduce nausea and vomiting, and they may wish to add a motion sickness (Scopolamine) patch behind your ear.

## LENGTH AND STAY

The operation usually takes 1 hour or less if performed alone. It is a same-day surgery – meaning you go home the same day.

\*If you are from out of town, we will help arrange accommodations, and we can arrange the possibility of a nurse checking on you (or staying with you).

## General

- You may shower after 1-2 days but please avoid direct stream of water to the face
- If you wear contacts generally we do not want you to use these or place these for at least 2 weeks.

## Diet

Generally, only a “clear liquid,” or bland diet should be taken for the first 24 hours after surgery, as anesthesia can cause an upset stomach. This includes items such as clear juices, broths, Jell-O, and dry crackers. Pineapple juice has also been shown to reduce swelling/bruising. After 24-48 hours, a regular diet can be resumed as tolerated.

## Medication

- Antibiotics are typically given during surgery and continued for 1 week at home. We will give you a prescription when you are discharged.
- We will give you a prescription for oral pain medication at discharge. For safety, the medication dose is weight based.
- All medications should be taken exactly and only as directed.



## Topical Ointments

Eyelids ointments will be critical to apply following blepharoplasty.

- **Eyelids** (for the blepharoplasty incisions): Please apply the ointments as directed. We typically prescribe a steroid/antibiotic ointment (tobradex or similar) and/or an ophthalmologic eye ointment. Please apply this to your blue stitches above and below the lash lines, as directed several times per day.

**You may have a temporary dissolving suture at the corner of your eyelids if we have done lower lid procedures – this is to help hold your eyelid up during the initial week of healing.**

PLEASE DO NOT USE REGULAR BACITRACIN AROUND YOUR EYES – IT MUST BE OPHTHALMIC TYPE

If you have had concurrent brow lift and chemical peel, please adhere to the following:

- **Scalp/Brow lift incisions.** Please apply regular bacitracin 2-3 x per day until we see you back for suture removal.
- **Chemical peel or dermabrasion sites.** Around the eyes please use the eye ointments as above, on both the incisions and the undereye regions. Around the mouth bacitracin should be used for the first 3-4 days, then you can switch to Aquaphor and/or Vaseline and/or vitamin E cream. (Green tea bags or cream is ok here too).

**Scar care:** Begin 2-3 days after sutures are removed. Please alternate between – **Green tea** containing eyecream (please ensure no parabens), and **Vitamin E** containing eyecreams (i.e., morning green tea, midday Vitamin E, evening green tea, bedtime vitamin E). After 7-10 days of these creams you can use a silicone based ointment. Silicone strips are not usually possible to use around the eyes – but the gel form is usable for the upper lid, please do not get it in the eye itself. *Mederma* or similar represents the silicone scar gel.

## POST OPERATIVE SWELLING AND BRUISING

- The amount of swelling varies from patient to patient and cannot always be predicted.
- Swelling increases first 2-3 days and begins decreasing until the end of the second week.
- We do several things to help lessen the edema [Ask to see our papers/preferences].
- Bruising – the eyelid skin is thin and some bruising will be evident.
  - Follow our instructions relating to blood thinners and medications
  - Ice and creams listed below will help.
  - Preparation H ointment before and after surgery to the eyelids will help.
- Facial ice packs are crucial the first 2-3 days after surgery.
  - Green tea bags – steeped ahead of time and then placed in freezer
  - Place these on the closed upper eyelids for 15-20 minutes on the hour the first week after surgery (and after if possible).
- Arnica and vitamin K cream (topical), pineapple juice (drinking it) can help
- Traumeel ointment apply to the face 3x / day.



- Arnica pills or tabs 3x/day; also Bromelain tabs 2-3x /day
- Anti-inflammatory medication (steroid type) (Medrol dosepack, usually only after first week)
- Keeping head elevated.
- Stay upright and walk around. (not with exertion and sit up slowly)
- Lymphatic facial massage before surgery (possibly after).

### **COLD PACKS FOR POST-OPERATIVE SWELLING**

Cold packs are very important in the first 48 hours after surgery to reduce post-operative swelling. Use them 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off, to prevent damage to the skin. After 48 hours, you may still apply cold packs for comfort, but the therapeutic value will be diminished.

Below are suggestions and comments regarding various types of cold packs:

**Green tea bags** These are ideal for swelling and bruising around the eyes. Steep these in hot water in advance, and then place into the freezer. These can then be placed over your closed eyes. Keep the on for 15-20 minutes each hour over the first week.

**Retail Cold Packs** There are often several types of cold packs for sale in the first aid section of the drugstore. Unfortunately, some are usually somewhat stiff and not designed for small, delicate areas like the nose and eyes. So make sure you purchase the round soft packs intended for eyelids.

**Frozen Vegetables** Another commonly used cold pack is a bag of frozen vegetables. Small vegetables like peas work best, because they can conform to the shape of the nose or other body part. However, the vegetables will start to degrade from repeated defrosting and refreezing. You should not eat the vegetables after using them for cold packs.

### **Bruising and Dark Circles**

Bruising may occur within 3-5 days after surgery and usually disappears by 2-3 weeks.

- Arnica and Vitamin K (topical) and Pineapple juice (drinking it) can help it resolve
- Traumeel ointment to face 3x/day.
- Preparation H ointment before and after surgery to the eyelids will help.
- It is normal to have bruising and swelling around your eyes, as well as slight numbness of the area following surgery.
- Follow our instructions relating to blood thinners and medications
- Ice (as above)
- Creams (as above) listed below will help.
- Dark circle. In some cases the pigments from bruising will linger – or pre-existing dark circles will persist. Depending on the cause, there are options to help lessen this – including preparation H, arnica; but also Hydroquinone, and possibly laser therapy.

### **Activity**

- Keep your head elevated with 2-3 pillows.
- Stay upright and walk around – helps the swelling drain. Sit up slowly, and don't overdo it. If you feel dizzy sit again. Ensure you are drinking enough and sit up and walk slowly without much exertion.



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- You can SHOWER / BATHE at 1 days after surgery – but make sure a family member can assist you. Please have someone help you and consider sitting if possible.
- DO NOT Squat or stoop. And minimize or have someone help if climbing stairs after surgery.
- NO Strenuous aerobic activity, NO lifting over 5 pounds should be avoided for 2 weeks.
- NO contact sports for 3-4 weeks.
- Patients may feel up to returning to work after 5-10 days; but it depends on your specific job and the activities you perform at work. Discuss this with us at your visit.

### Follow-up

The first follow up appointment is usually 7-10 days post-operative. At this visit, we will assess the surgical site and remove some or all of the sutures. We typically recommend additional follow-up visits at approximately 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 1 year from your date of surgery.

For additional information and before and after examples please visit:

<https://www.dereksteinbacher.com/eyelid-surgery/>

OR

<https://www.instagram.com/dereksteinbacher/?hl=en>

Office Phone: 203-453-6635

Office Fax: 203-458-7580

In the event, you have urgent concerns please contact or message us.

### Concerns and Contacts

Please call 203-453-6635 for assistance/concerns, such as persistent fever (greater than 101 degrees), excessive drainage or bleeding, difficulty breathing or new onset swelling.

In case of an emergency, call 911.

