

Information

Eyelid Surgery





EMP FANG

What is Eyelid Surgery?

Eyelid surgery involves a surgical intervention on the eyelids (lower and/or upper lid) and their surroundings. It is performed to preserve eyelid function, for tumor removal, eyelid reconstruction, or for cosmetic reasons.

Eyelid surgery can be useful in following conditions:

- Sagging skin that wrinkles or disturbs the natural contour of the upper eyelid and which can affect the vision or field of vision.
- Excess fat deposits that show up as swelling of the eyelids.
- Bags under the eyes.
- Drooping lower eyelids that reveal the whites of the eyes.
- Excess skin and fine lines on the lower eyelid.

There are different reasons for eyelid changes. The eyelids must always be examined and assessed in the context of the entire face. Systemic pre-existing conditions may also play a role (e.g. nerve or muscle diseases). Lid changes may be due in part to connective tissue weakness, nerve palsy, muscle strain, or scarring adhesions and may be related to the forehead or eyebrows.

The Surgery

Please **fast** prior to the operation (no food or drink starting 6 hours before the admission time).

Anesthesia

Anesthetic drugs will be administered to you so that you do not feel any pain during the operation. You have the choice between local anesthesia with or without intravenous sedation or general anesthesia. Our anesthesiologists will discuss with you the most suitable method for you.

Surgery

The skin incision lines are made in such a way that the resulting scars remain hidden in the natural structures of the eyelid. This is not always possible, especially in patients undergoing lid reconstruction after tumor removal.

Wound closure

The eyelid incisions are usually closed with stitches or skin glue.



Risks

Every surgery is associated with risks. A detailed assessment of the benefits and risks of the surgical procedure will be conducted prior to the surgery together with the treating team. The final decision for or against surgery is yours. You can withdraw from an operation at any time.

Risks include:

- Swelling and bruising
- Bleeding from the wound
- Dry eyes, foreign body sensation
- Asymmetry of the eyelids
- Sensitivity to light
- Poor wound healing
- Need for further surgery, including possible revision operations
- Unfavorable scar formation
- Difficulty closing your eyes
- Incomplete lid closure with possible dry eye and ocular surface problems
- Ectropion: an outward curling of the eyelid
- Inflammation/infection
- Changes in skin sensation or numbness
- Persistent pain
- General anesthetic risks
- Temporary or permanent change in vision and risk of blindness (very rare)

It is important that you discuss all of your questions with your surgeon before the procedure.

Postoperative Recommendations

Cooling

- In order to reduce post-operative tissue swelling, we recommend cooling the wound area for approx. the first 4 days.
- Cold compresses: Wrap a cold pack from the freezer in a (damp) cloth.
- Apply the compress directly to closed eyelids for 10 minutes 6-8 times per day.

Eye drops, eye ointment and eye bandage

- Apply a thin strip of the prescribed antibiotic ointment to the wounds three times a day.
- If necessary, you can also use moisturizing eye drops and an eye ointment for the night. These help against dry eyes and a foreign body sensation.
- It is normal for eye drops and eye ointment to temporarily blur your vision.
- Depending on the operation, your eyes will be temporarily covered with a pressure bandage.



Thread removal

- Different types of sutures are used, depending on the operation.
- Depending on the doctor's instructions, non-absorbable sutures are usually removed after 1-2 weeks.

Postoperative pain

- You may have discomfort for a few days postoperatively.
- Paracetamol (Dafalgan) is often sufficient to treat your pain (please observe the maximum recommended dose).
- Depending on the postoperative course, you may be prescribed additional painkillers. According to the prescription, you can take one tablet every 4 - 6 hours.
- Aspirin should be avoided (if possible) as it thins the blood and can increase the discoloration of the eyelids due to increased bruising.
- If you suffer from persistent, severe or stabbing pain, especially if this is accompanied by vomiting or fever, please contact our eye clinic immediately.

What to avoid

- Driving vehicles after sedation/general anesthesia or while taking prescription pain medication
- Working in a very dusty or dirty environment
- Wearing contact lenses for at least 2-3 days. Exception: protective contact lenses which were given in the hospital.
- Heavy lifting or strenuous activity for 1 week
- Swimming up to 4 weeks after the operation
- Make-up until the sutures are removed or the wound is well healed
- Direct exposure to the sun, if possible. Wear sunglasses and/or a wide-brimmed hat.
- Smoking slows down the healing process and can lead to wound healing disorders.

Normal Symptoms and Warning Signs



Normal symptoms

- Slight oozing of blood from the wound or bloody tears in the first 2 days.
- Swelling in the surgical area. This is caused by the body's own healing process and can take about 1-2 months. The swelling will likely be more pronounced on the 2nd or 3rd day after the operation and then decreases significantly over the next 3-4 weeks.
- Some black and blue discoloration of the eyelids; due to gravity, the discoloration can spread to the cheeks and less often to the nape of the neck.
- Dryness / foreign body sensation in the eyes or excessive tearing. Moisturizing ointments and drops (at least 4-6 times a day) may help.
- Slightly blurred vision due to swelling and ointment.
- Surgical scars take up to a year to heal.



Warning signals

- Sudden, severe deterioration of vision.
- Severe, constant or stabbing pain or itching.
- Extreme swelling around the surgical site with marked warmth, redness, pain or hardening.

If you have any suspicious symptoms, we recommend that you see your ophthalmologist within 24 hours or visit us at the department of ophthalmology (during daytime from Monday to Friday) or in the general emergency department at the Inselspital (from 5 p.m. and on weekends and public holidays).

Healing process

Healing after eyelid surgery takes a lot of time. The end result of the operation can only be assessed several months following surgery. The swelling usually decreases after a few weeks, but it can take up to a year for the incision lines and contour to fully heal. Although good results are expected, there are no guarantees. In some situations, additional surgeries may be required to achieve optimal results.

Contact Information Inselspital Eye Clinic

You can reach an ophthalmologist at the Inselspital 24 hours a day.

Department of Ophthalmology (Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

+ 41 31 632 25 01

General contact Inselspital Bern (24 hours):

+41 31 632 21 11

(ask for the ophthalmologist)





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