



# nip&tuck

## Blepharoplasty

One of the first signs of ageing is bagginess or puffiness around the eyes, often associated with wrinkling of the eyelid skin. Absolute expert, **Mr Paul Banwell FRCS(Plast)**, Consultant Plastic & Cosmetic Surgeon, looks at some of the options available for giving your eyes a fresher, rejuvenated look.

**Blepharoplasty is designed to correct this condition and to restore the youthful alert appearance of your eyes. This condition may be present in the upper eyelids, lower eyelids, or both. It also may be associated with looseness of the skin of the eyebrows or temple region.**

Normally, everyone has a small amount of fat around the eyeball. If the quantity of fat increases, or the local tissues stretch and weaken, the fat begins to bulge, producing "bags." Occasionally this bulging is seen in young patients and is an inherited family trait and not a result of aging. The laxity and wrinkling of eyelid skin may be seen alone or in conjunction with excess fat. These changes have a striking effect on one's appearance. An attractive face with these early signs of aging can affect a patient's self image, attitude, and sense of well-being.

#### What is a blepharoplasty?

Blepharoplasty is an operation designed to *remove sagging skin and muscle from the eyelids and to remove "bags" by trimming away excess fat bulges.* In some cases, the upper or lower lids can be treated alone. If indicated, all four lids may be treated at the same time. At times, a forehead lift and/or a face lift is done along with the eyelid surgery. Excess drooping of the eyebrows and corners of the upper eyelids may require a forehead lift to correct the area.

#### Where are the incisions?

The incision in the upper lid usually lies in the lid crease. The incision in the lower lid lies just below the eyelashes and parallel to the lid

edge. Both incisions may extend for a short distance beyond the eyelids, toward the temple. In certain cases, lower lid incisions may be made inside the lid (transconjunctival incision). Excellent healing is characteristic of the eyelid skin, and once the wounds are mature, they usually become quite inconspicuous. The outer part of the incision - the part extending toward the temple - is the slowest to mature and is sometimes noticeably pink for some months after the operation. The stitches are removed in three to seven days after surgery.

#### How fast is recovery?

Swelling, discoloration, and bruising is to be expected. It is not unusual to have some difficulty seeing during the first day or two after surgery because of the swelling. Patients vary a great deal in their recovery rate but usually can resume normal light activity or work 3-4 days after surgery. Dark glasses and make-up can be used to camouflage the swelling and discoloration. The patient will usually be presentable without dark glasses in 10 days. A small amount of residual swelling persists for many weeks but gradually disappears.

#### Will the bags/wrinkles come back?

Sagging skin or wrinkles may recur as the years go by, but it is unusual for "bags" to recur. The operation can be repeated

as necessary. "Crow's feet" (skin wrinkling at the corner of the eye near the temple) is not greatly affected by this procedure; they may be helped with an ancillary procedure such as a microdermabrasion, prescriptive chemical peels or the use of anti-wrinkle injection (B-tox).

Paul E Banwell FRCS (Plast) is an NHS Consultant Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgeon at the Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead. He also works in Brighton and Worthing and may be contacted on 01342 330302. Alternatively, please email at [help@paulbanwell.com](mailto:help@paulbanwell.com) or for further information on cosmetic surgery see [www.paulebanwell.com](http://www.paulebanwell.com).