

RISKS – EYELID SURGERY

This document has been prepared to help inform you about eyelid surgery, risks involved and alternative treatment(s). It is important that you read this information carefully and completely.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

Alternative forms of management include not treating the skin laxness and bagginess in the eyelids by surgery. Improvement of skin laxness, fatty deposits and skin wrinkles may be accomplished by other treatments or surgery such as a brow lift when indicated. Minor skin wrinkling may be improved through chemical skin-peels, laser resurfacing, or other skin treatments. Risks and potential complications are associated with alternative surgical forms of treatment.

PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING RISKS ARE UNLIKELY & DO NOT REFLECT DR TSIRBAS' COMMON PERI-OPERATIVE OCCURRENCES.

RISKS OF EYELID SURGERY

Bleeding- It is possible, though unusual, to experience a bleeding episode during or after surgery. Bleeding may occur under the skin or internally around the eyeball. Intra-operative blood transfusions may be required. Should post-operative bleeding occur, it may require emergency treatment, surgery, or blood transfusion. Do not take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for ten days before or after surgery, as this may increase the risk of bleeding. Non-prescription “herbs” and dietary supplements can increase the risk of surgical bleeding. Hypertension (high blood pressure) that is not under good medical control may cause bleeding during or after surgery. Accumulations of blood under the eyelids may delay healing and cause scarring. Hematoma can occur at any time following injury. If blood transfusions are needed to treat blood loss, there is a risk of blood-related infections such as hepatitis and HIV (AIDS). Heparin medications that are used to prevent blood clots in veins can produce bleeding and decreased blood platelets.

Blindness- Blindness is extremely rare after Eyelid Surgery. However, internal bleeding around the eye during or after surgery can cause it. The occurrence of this is not predictable.

Infection- Infection is unusual after surgery. Should an infection occur, additional treatment including antibiotics, hospitalisation, or additional surgery may be necessary.

Scarring- All surgery leaves scars, some more visible than others. Although good wound healing after a surgical procedure is expected, abnormal scars may occur within the eyelid and deeper tissues. Scars may be unattractive and of different colour than the surrounding skin tone. Scar appearance may also vary within the same scar. Scars may be asymmetrical (appear different on the right and left side of the body). There is the possibility of visible marks in the eyelid or small skin cysts from sutures. In some cases scars may require surgical revision or treatment.

Damage to Deeper Structures- There is the potential for injury to deeper structures including, nerves, blood vessels, eye muscles, and lungs (pneumothorax) during any surgical procedure. The potential for this to occur varies according to the type of Eyelid Surgery procedure performed. Injury to deeper structures may be temporary or permanent.

Dry Eye Problems- Permanent disorders involving decreased tear production can occur after Eyelid Surgery. The occurrence of this is rare and not entirely predictable. Individuals who normally have dry eyes may be advised to use special caution in considering Eyelid Surgery.

Asymmetry- The human face is normally asymmetrical. There can be a variation from one side to the other in the results obtained from Eyelid Surgery. Additional surgery may be necessary to attempt to revise asymmetry.

Pain- You will experience pain after your surgery. Pain of varying intensity and duration may occur and persist after Eyelid Surgery. Chronic pain may occur very infrequently from nerves becoming trapped in scar tissue.

Ectropion- Displacement of the lower eyelid away from the eyeball is a rare complication in some Eyelid Surgery procedures. Further surgery may be required to correct this condition.

Corneal Exposure Problems- Some patients experience difficulties closing their eyelids after surgery and problems may occur in the cornea due to dryness. Should this rare complication occur, additional treatments or surgery and treatment may be necessary.

Allergic Reactions- In rare cases, local allergies to tape, suture materials and glues, blood products, topical preparations or injected agents have been reported. Serious systemic reactions including shock (anaphylaxis) may occur to drugs used during surgery and prescription medications. Allergic reactions may require additional treatment.

Eyelash Hair Loss- Hair loss may occur in the lower eyelash area where the skin was elevated during surgery. The occurrence of this is not predictable. Hair loss may be temporary or permanent.

Delayed Healing- Wound disruption or delayed wound healing is possible. Some areas of the skin may not heal normally and may take a long time to heal. Areas of skin may die. This may require frequent dressing changes or further surgery to remove the non-healed tissue. **Smokers have a greater risk of skin loss and wound healing complications.**

Change in Skin Sensation- It is common to experience diminished (or loss) of skin sensation in areas that have had surgery. Diminished (or complete loss of skin sensation) may not totally resolve after Eyelid Surgery.

Skin Contour Irregularities- Contour irregularities and depressions may occur after Eyelid Surgery. Visible and palpable wrinkling of skin can occur. Residual skin irregularities at the ends of the incisions or “dog ears” are always a possibility and may require additional surgery. This may improve with time, or it can be surgically corrected.

Skin Discolouration / Swelling- Some bruising and swelling normally occurs following Eyelid Surgery. The skin in or near the surgical site can appear either lighter or darker than surrounding skin. Although uncommon, swelling and skin discolouration may persist for long periods of time and, in rare situations, may be permanent.

Skin Sensitivity- Itching, tenderness, or exaggerated responses to hot or cold temperatures may occur after surgery. Usually this resolves during healing, but in rare situations it may be chronic.

Sutures- Most surgical techniques use deep sutures. You may notice these sutures after your surgery. Sutures may spontaneously poke through the skin, become visible or produce irritation that requires removal.

Surgical Anaesthesia- Both local and general anesthetics involve risk. There is the possibility of complications, injury, and even death from all forms of surgical anaesthesia or sedation.

Shock- In rare circumstances, your surgical procedure can cause severe trauma, particularly when multiple or extensive procedures are performed. Although serious complications are infrequent, infections or excessive fluid loss can lead to severe illness and even death. If surgical shock occurs, hospitalisation and additional treatment would be necessary.

Seroma- Fluid accumulations infrequently occur in between the skin and the underlying tissues. Should this problem occur, it may require additional procedures for drainage of fluid.

Unsatisfactory Result- Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained. You may be disappointed with the results of eyelid surgery. This would include risks such as asymmetry, unsatisfactory surgical scar location, unacceptable visible deformities, loss of function, poor healing, wound disruption, and loss of sensation. It may be necessary to perform additional surgery to improve your results. Additional surgical procedures such as a brow lift may be needed to correct eyebrow sagging which contributes to upper eyelid problems.

Cardiac and Pulmonary Complications- Surgery, especially longer procedures, may be associated with the formation of, or increase in, blood clots in the venous system. Pulmonary complications may occur secondarily to both blood clots (pulmonary emboli), fat deposits (fat emboli) or partial collapse of the lungs after general anaesthesia. Pulmonary and fat emboli can be life-threatening or fatal in some circumstances. Air travel, inactivity and other conditions may increase the incidence of blood clots traveling to the lungs causing a major blood clot that may result in death. It is important to discuss with your physician any past history of blood clots or swollen legs that may contribute to this condition.

Cardiac complications are a risk with any surgery and anaesthesia, even in patients without symptoms. If you experience shortness of breath, chest pains, or unusual heartbeats, seek medical attention immediately. Should any of these complications occur, you may require hospitalisation and additional treatment.

ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES

Long-Term Results- Subsequent alterations in eyelid appearance may occur as the result of ageing, weight loss or gain, sun exposure, pregnancy, menopause, or other circumstances not related to Eyelid Surgery. Eyelid Surgery does not arrest the ageing process or produce permanent tightening of the eyelid region. Future surgery or other treatments may be necessary to maintain the results of Eyelid Surgery.

Skin Disorders / Skin Cancer- Skin disorders and skin cancer may occur independently of Eyelid Surgery.

Female Patient Information- It is important to inform your surgeon if you use birth control pills, oestrogen replacement, or if you believe you may be pregnant. Many medications including antibiotics may neutralise the preventive effect of birth control pills, allowing for conception and

pregnancy.

Intimate Relations After Surgery- Surgery involves coagulating of blood vessels and increased activity of any kind may open these vessels leading to a bleed, or hematoma. Activity that increases your pulse or heart rate may cause additional bruising, swelling, and the need for return to surgery and control bleeding. It is wise to refrain from sexual activity until your physician states it is safe.

Smoking, Second-Hand Smoke Exposure, Nicotine Products (Patch, Gum, Nasal Spray)- Patients who are currently smoking, use tobacco products, or nicotine products (patch, gum, or nasal spray) are at a greater risk for significant surgical complications of skin dying, delayed healing, and additional scarring. Individuals exposed to second-hand smoke are also at potential risk for similar complications attributable to nicotine exposure. Additionally, smoking may have a significant negative effect on anaesthesia and recovery from anaesthesia, with coughing and possibly increased bleeding. Individuals who are not exposed to tobacco smoke or nicotine-containing products have a significantly lower risk of this type of complication. It is important to refrain from smoking at least 6 weeks before surgery and until your physician states it is safe to return, if desired.

Mental Health Disorders and Elective Surgery- It is important that all patients seeking to undergo elective surgery have realistic expectations that focus on improvement rather than perfection. Complications or less than satisfactory results are sometimes unavoidable, may require additional surgery and often are stressful. Please openly discuss with your surgeon, prior to surgery, any history that you may have of significant emotional depression or mental health disorders. Although many individuals may benefit psychologically from the results of elective surgery, effects on mental health cannot be accurately predicted.

Medications- There are many adverse reactions that occur as the result of taking over-the-counter, herbal, and/or prescription medications. Be sure to check with your physician about any drug interactions that may exist with medications which you are already taking. If you have an adverse reaction, stop the drugs immediately and call your surgeon for further instructions. If the reaction is severe, go immediately to the nearest emergency room. When taking the prescribed pain medications after surgery, realise that they can affect your thought process and coordination. Do not drive, do not operate complex equipment, do not make any important decisions, and do not drink any alcohol while taking these medications. Be sure to take your prescribed medication only as directed.

ADDITIONAL SURGERY NECESSARY

There are many variable conditions in addition to risk and potential surgical complications that may influence the long-term result of eyelid surgery. Secondary surgery may be necessary to obtain optimal results. Even though risks and complications occur infrequently, the risks cited are the ones that are particularly associated with Eyelid Surgery. Other complications and risks can occur but are even more uncommon. Should complications occur, additional surgery or other treatments may be necessary. The practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science. Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained.