

**BLEPHAROPLASTY  
AN UPPER AND/OR LOWER EYELID LIFT  
WITH ANGELIQUE M. BERENS, MD  
INTRODUCTION**

**THE PROCEDURE**

As we age, the skin around our eyes becomes loose and begins to sag. These changes may interfere with your vision and/or contribute to a tired, sad, or angry look. Blepharoplasty is a simple procedure that removes excess skin, muscle, and/or fat of the upper and/or lower eyelids. The goal of this procedure is to restore the eyes' youthful appearance and function.

**WHAT TO EXPECT**

Dr. Berens will work with you to design a custom surgical procedure that results in a refreshed and younger version of yourself.

A complete blepharoplasty takes three hours: one hour for the upper lids and two hours for the lower lids. Patients can choose to have a partial blepharoplasty (just the upper or lower lid) or a complete blepharoplasty (entire eye area). The incisions for a blepharoplasty are minor. They are hidden either in the crease of the upper eyelid or placed on the inside of the lower lid.

Blepharoplasty may be done in the clinic office with local anesthetic or in the surgery center with sedation or general anesthesia. With either technique, patients may go home on the same day as their procedure.

Most patients return to work seven days after upper eyelid surgery and fourteen days after lower eyelid surgery. This procedure has minimal pain, but some bruising and swelling is expected and may last up to two weeks.

**OTHER OPTIONS**

Other procedures you may consider to tighten the skin of the lower eyelid include skin excision, laser skin tightening and chemical peel. Please ask us if you are interested in learning more about these choices.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**BEFORE SURGERY**

1. Only take Extra Strength Tylenol® for aches and pains, starting at least 14 days 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. Many medications and supplements can thin your blood and increase bleeding and bruising. Please do NOT take the following medications/supplements before surgery:
  - 14 Days before surgery:

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs): Ibuprofen, Motrin®, Advil®, Aleve®, Celebrex®, naproxen.

- 10 days before surgery:

Supplements: Vitamin E, fish oils, omega 3, herbal supplements (garlic, ginkgo, glucosamine, or ginseng).

- Please discuss use before surgery with Dr. Berens:

Prescription blood thinner: Coumadin®, warfarin, or Plavix®

Acne medication: Accutane®

Radiation: any radiation above the shoulders

Immunosuppression medications or treatments: long term steroids, immunomodulators, HIV, chemotherapy

3. It is ok to take a daily multivitamin, such as One-A-Day® or Centrum®, before surgery.
4. Avoid alcoholic beverages the night before surgery.
5. You can drink pineapple or blueberry juice to help prevent bruising. Drink one glass daily up to two weeks before your surgery. You can also buy arnica tablets/creams for bruising.
6. Smoking impairs wound healing. Therefore, it is important you stop smoking four weeks before and after surgery. Use of nicotine substitutes (patches/gum/vape) should also be avoided because they may contribute to poor wound healing.
7. Do not wear makeup or hair products the day of your procedure.
8. If you wear contacts, please wear your glasses to the surgery instead. Most patients wait several days after surgery to resume contact lens use due to the swelling around the eyes.
9. Please bring a list of your current medications (prescriptions, vitamins, and supplements) with you the day of the procedure. This way, you and Dr. Berens can talk about when to take them after surgery.

### **DAY OF SURGERY**

1. The day of your surgery you will either go to the surgery center or clinic office. This depends on what procedure you are having done. Please arrive to the clinic office/surgery center fifteen minutes early to fill in paperwork and take photos.
2. Be sure to wear loose and comfortable clothing.
3. Please arrange for transportation ahead of your procedure day. You will need an adult (18 years or older) to drive you home.  
If you have surgery in the clinic office, you will be able to go home right away.  
If you have surgery at the surgery center, you can usually go home about one to two hours after your surgery. You will also need an adult (18 years or older) to stay overnight with you after the surgery.
4. When you wake up from surgery, you will have ice-cold gauze over your eyes to reduce swelling. If you had lower lid blepharoplasty, you may also have dissolvable stitches along your lash line.

### **AFTER SURGERY**

1. Ice the surgical area for the first 48 hours after surgery for 20 min on and 20 min off. This reduces swelling, bruising, and pain. You can use eye-shaped ice packs from a pharmacy, frozen peas or a washcloth soaked in ice water.
2. You should expect swelling and bruising around your eyes after surgery. This is common and will last one to two weeks (or longer). Swelling is greater with lower eyelid surgery and the eyes may swell shut for the first couple of days.

3. Medications after surgery may include antibiotics, pain medications, anti-nausea medication and/or medicated ointment for the incisions.
4. Pain will be controlled with Tylenol and ibuprofen. Each medication should be taken every six hours and alternated so that you are taking pain medication every three hours. Maximum dose is 4000mg Tylenol in 24hours and 2400mg ibuprofen in 24 hours.
5. You may restart any medications or supplements you stopped before surgery one day after the surgery is finished.
6. Keep your head above your heart and avoid strenuous activity for the first one to two weeks after surgery. Sleep with your head elevated for the first three days.
7. It is okay to shower the day after surgery. The stitches can get wet and for soap and water to run over the stitches. Do NOT rub the stitches or your eyes, let the shower water spray directly on your stitches, or wipe the eye area with a towel. Let the area around the stitches air dry.
8. Apply antibiotic ointment over the stitches three times a day for the first three days after surgery. Use Vaseline or Aquaphor over the incision until after your stitches are removed. This will help keep the area moist, decrease scab formation, and improve your healing.
9. Your vision may be slightly blurry during the week after surgery from protective ointment eye drops used during surgery. If you have any significant vision change or tunnel-type vision, please contact Dr Berens's office or the doctor on-call right away.
10. If you use eye drops/ointment at home, you should NOT pull on your eyelid to apply them. This will damage your results. Instead, drop the medication directly into the eye from above or from the side.
11. Eye makeup over the incisions should be avoided for one week. Please buy new eye makeup to decrease the risk of infection.
12. A standard timeline for after your procedure:  
Day 1: Mild swelling, bruising and discomfort.  
Day 2-3: Maximum bruising, swelling, and crusting around eyelids.  
Day 7: Post-operative visit for wound check and suture removal.  
Week 1-4: Eyes may be irritated or teary.  
Week 3: Post-operative visit.  
Month 3: Post-operative visit.
13. Please call our office for the following:  
Any questions or concerns before or after your procedure.  
Significant increase in pain or swelling.  
Temperature over 100 degrees.  
Unusual bleeding or purulent drainage.  
Change(s) in vision.  
During business hours (Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm) please call the office at (360) 454-1941.  
After hours a doctor can be reached at (425) 258-9000.  
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If you cannot reach our office for any reason, please present to the emergency department for evaluation of any life or vision threatening concerns.

## **RISKS**

**Dry Eye:** Permanent decreased tear production can occur. Patients with dry eyes should undergo extra testing before blepharoplasty. This can help with decreasing the risk of dry eye worsening after surgery. Dry eye can be treated with eye drops and ointments. Extra surgery to modify tear drainage may be needed if dry eye is severe.

**Vision Loss:** Bleeding behind the eye in lower lid blepharoplasty can lead to total vision loss. This complication is extremely rare and increased by poorly controlled hypertension, bleeding disorders, and medications that increase bleeding. If excess bleeding behind the eye occurs, emergency surgery is needed to stop the bleeding and save the vision.

**Corneal Abrasion:** This can happen if the surface of the eye is scratched during surgery. Abrasions are treated with eye drops.

**Corneal Exposure:** Incomplete eye closure after surgery leads to exposure and dryness of the cornea. This is treated with eye drops and lubrication. More surgery may be needed if severe.

**Muscle Injury and Double Vision:** During lower blepharoplasty one of the muscles that moves the eye can be damaged. This can lead to double vision. Double vision usually resolves in several weeks after swelling improves but could need further surgery.

**Asymmetry:** Eyes are rarely symmetric before blepharoplasty and asymmetries can be noticed after blepharoplasty. Another surgery may be needed to improve asymmetries.

**Blurry Vision:** Swelling and lubricants can lead to blurred vision for several days.

**Visible Scars:** All surgery leaves scars. Every effort is made to minimize the appearance of scars. Please talk about any history of keloids with Dr. Berens.

**Bleeding:** Small amount of bleeding from the incision area can happen for the first 24 hours after surgery. A small amount of pressure can be placed on the bleeding area to help stop bleeding.

**Infection:** May need further surgery and/or antibiotic treatment. Risk is increased in diabetics and those are immunocompromised.

**Delayed Healing:** The surgical wound may heal slowly due to a variety of reasons (e.g., diabetes and smoking). The delayed healing may need extra wound care.

**Skin Discoloration / Swelling:** Bruising and swelling are parts of the normal post-operative healing process. Rarely, the swelling and discoloration may take a long time to go away or be permanent.

**Poor Cosmetic Result:** Dr. Berens will make every effort to give you an excellent result. An unfavorable cosmetic result is most commonly due to poor communication between you and Dr. Berens about the results you wanted or limitations of the surgery.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

### **LONG-TERM RESULTS**

There are a variety of conditions that may influence the long-term result of surgery. Your appearance may change after surgery due to aging, sun exposure, changes in weight, hormonal changes or other circumstances not related to your surgery. Blepharoplasty surgery does not stop the aging process or produce permanent tightening of the eyelid region. Future surgery or other treatments may be necessary to maintain the results of a blepharoplasty.

### **FEMALE PATIENT INFORMATION**

It is important to tell your Dr. Berens if you use birth control pills, estrogen replacement, or if you suspect you may be pregnant. Many medications, including antibiotics, may stop the preventive effect of birth control pills, allowing for conception and pregnancy.

### **MENTAL HEALTH AND ELECTIVE SURGERY**

It is important that all patients seeking elective surgery have realistic expectations that focus on improvement rather than perfection. Complications or less than satisfactory results are sometimes unavoidable, may need more surgery, and often are stressful. Before your surgery, please openly talk about any history that you may have of significant emotional depression or mental health problems with Dr. Berens. Although many individuals may benefit psychologically from the results of elective surgery, effects on mental health cannot be accurately predicted.

### **PART OF BEING WELL IS BEING HEARD**

Do you have an experience, feedback, or advice that you would like to share with me or with other patients? Consider sharing your feedback on the following platforms:

### **GOOGLE REVIEWS**

These reviews will help patients who use Google to learn more about their physician. It is helpful to use the name of your procedure in the review.

1. Go to: [google.com/maps](https://google.com/maps)
2. Search: Angelique Berens
3. Scroll to the very bottom on the left and click "write a review"
4. Write details about your experience or advice for future patients!

### **EVERETT CLINIC FEEDBACK SURVEYS**

Help us understand what works well so that we can improve the experience for the next patient. We share comments left in the provider section online on [everettclinic.com](https://everettclinic.com) for our providers' profiles.

1. Go to [www.EverettClinic.com/give-us-your-feedback](https://www.EverettClinic.com/give-us-your-feedback)
2. Share your advice and/or feedback about your experience!

### **REALSELF.COM**

This Seattle-based website makes sure the reviews and physicians are verified. They do ask for some information from you, but they never share your information

1. Go to [www.realself.com/review/write](https://www.realself.com/review/write)
2. Select "Treatment: eyelid surgery and/or eye bags treatment"
3. Insert 'Angelique M Berens, M' for the provider
4. Share your thoughts!