



# The eyes have it!

Treatments to return a youthful appearance to your eyes

By Jennifer Blyth  
*Black Press*

If the eyes are the windows to the soul, they can also shed light on how time, lifestyle, genetics and simple gravity affects how we look.

However, the good news is that today people have a variety of options to address these signs of aging if they wish to; including non-surgical treatments such as Botox and fillers (see pages 9 and 13 for more on these procedures). Beyond those measures are procedures such as brow lifts and upper or lower “eyelid lifts,” technically termed blepharoplasty, explains ophthalmologist Dr. Stephen Baker, of Victoria Eyelid Surgery, who also performs non-surgical techniques as well as surgery. “Everybody is different, but most people who come in want to have a refreshed look and to get rid of extra skin and bags,” he says. “Most people want to have a natural, non-surgical look. They want to look refreshed but not have others knowing they had surgery. This is what we try to achieve.”

During an initial consultation, the physician will typically examine the patient and review their concerns and goals. As with any cosmetic procedures, “it’s important to set realistic expectations and know what is and isn’t possible.”

Often, combinations of Botox, injectable fillers and lifts can work well together.

“If you have a combination of treatments, you can often get your most dramatic results, but not everyone wants big dramatic results,” Baker points out. “Everyone has their own comfort level.”

While individual situations vary, the operation typically takes between 60 and 90 minutes. Eyelid surgery is commonly performed under local anesthesia, numbing the area around the eyes, along with oral sedatives. “Most people say it’s easier than going to the dentist,” he says.

“You’ll be awake but relaxed and insensitive to pain during the surgery. The anatomy of the eyelids, the patient’s skin quality, age and adjacent bony and soft tissue all factor in to the final results.”

While there is always mild to moderate swelling settling nicely in about a week or so, delicate surgical techniques and vigilant pre- and post-operative care mean many of Baker’s patients have minimal bruising or discoloration. Patients should be able to read or watch TV following surgery, but won’t be able to wear contact lenses for about two weeks. Stitches will be removed about a week later. Most people feel ready to go out in public (and back to work) in a week to 10 days, with or without some minor coverup makeup.

## Procedures:

**Oculoplastic surgery** – a unique specialty combining training in ophthalmology and plastic surgery, with an emphasis on eye health and vision preservation.

Cosmetic oculoplastic surgery is concerned with improving the appearance of the eyelids, eyebrows, forehead and face. Reconstructive oculoplastic surgery involves the correction of defects caused by aging, trauma, tumors and congenital abnormalities. Most of these conditions

can detract from appearance and cause discomfort. Certain conditions, such as eyelid tumors, eyelid position problems, thyroid disease and congenital ptosis (droopy eyelids), can cause significant permanent damage if left untreated.

**Blepharoplasty, or upper or lower eyelid lifts** – either a functional or cosmetic surgical procedure that reshapes the upper or lower eyelid by removing and/or repositioning excess tissue and reinforcing surrounding muscles and tendons.

Upper eyelid lifts can also improve peripheral vision when an advanced amount of upper eyelid skin hangs over eyelashes. The outer and upper parts of the visual field are most commonly affected and the condition may cause difficulty with activities such as driving or reading. Lower eyelid lifts are often cosmetic, to improve puffy lower eyelid “bags” and reduce wrinkling.

The lifts are performed with external incisions along the natural skin lines of the eyelids, such as the creases of the upper lids and below the lashes of the lower lids, or from the inside surface of the lower eyelid.

**Asian blepharoplasty** – This involves re-shaping the skin around the eyes. Anatomically, Asians’ upper eyelids are different than Caucasians’. About half of Asians are born with a single eyelid; this procedure creates an upper eyelid with a crease (double eyelid) from one without a crease (single eyelid). A procedure to remove the epicanthal fold

(epicanthoplasty) is often performed in conjunction with an Asian blepharoplasty. Some patients may choose to have only a “thinning” of excess skin or fat from fuller eyelids.

**Transconjunctival blepharoplasty** – a tiny incision is made inside the lower eyelid and fat is removed from behind the eyelid without a skin incision. The incision is closed behind the eyelid with a single dissolving suture.

What does

*Beauty*  
mean to you?

“We often say beauty comes from within. Over time however, certain facial gestures such as squinting into the sun or deep concentration can lead to unwanted lines that have others feeling you are angry at them. For a person like this Botox and/or facial fillers may be transformative. The person must look like themselves, natural and refreshed. With surgery we aim for the same goal. We don’t want a ‘surgical look’ or a ‘cookie cutter’ appearance. What makes someone beautiful is unique and specific to each person.

– Dr. Steve Baker,  
ophthalmologist