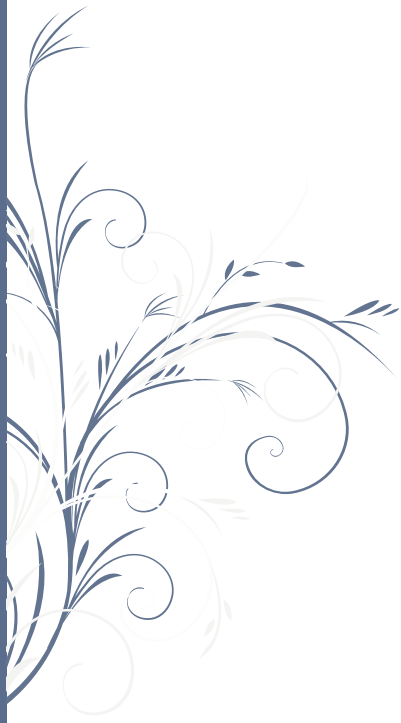




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Cosmetic Plastic Surgeon

Blepharoplasty





Blepharoplasty

The operation to correct ageing of the eyelids is known as blepharoplasty. Our eyes are the most important feature on our face and their beauty can be greatly reduced by excess skin creases and eye bags. There are several factors contributing to this:

- A) Heredity is an important factor where young or middle-aged patients may exhibit changes which are usually associated with older age.
- B) The bony structure of the face. Slightly under-developed malar bones provide insufficient support to the lower lids and may lead to appearance of lower lid bags in the young patient, as well as a low position of the lid.
- C) Exposure to sunlight or ultraviolet rays is also damaging to eyelids, both due to the direct effect on the skin and overactive muscles from frequent squinting.
- D) The normal ageing process involves the stretching of the eyelid skin which results in excess folds and wrinkles and the sagging of the fat around the eye itself which appears as bulges in the upper and lower lids.

Unfortunately, it is never possible to eradicate all eyelid creases, for to do so would invariably produce an over correction, due to excess tension on the eyelids. This operation removes excess skin and bags to give the eyes a fresher look but will not remove the wrinkles or laughter lines from the sides of the eyes. These may be improved with Botox injections or skin resurfacing (ex laser). Malar bags (bulges high on the cheek bones) are also not corrected in this procedure.

At your consultation you will be asked your general medical history with details of any previous eyelid surgery and you will also be asked about possible thyroid or kidney disease as these can cause swelling of the eyelids. Slight differences in facial symmetry are normal and are usually pointed out as they are often unnoticed by the patient. The surgeon will describe the positioning of the scars and indicate the likely postoperative results.

The Operation

Blepharoplasty can be carried out both with local anaesthetic and sedation or under general anaesthetic. They are usually performed as day case operations. This procedure is often carried out at the same time as a facelift giving excellent overall results. The incision for the upper eye is the natural crease line approximately one centimetre above the eyelashes and extends out into the 'crow's foot' area. The excess skin is trimmed, any fat usually present in the adjacent area to the sides of the nose is removed and the lid is then sutured using one continuous stitch. The incision for the lower eye is just below the eyelashes, again, extending out into a natural laughter line. The tissues are then elevated and hinged forward and excess fat removed or redraped. The skin is then lifted upwards and outwards gently tensioning the area and removing the overlapping skin and suturing to close. Sometimes the lower lid surgery can be carried out without external scars if the skin excess is minimal.

After the Operation

Sutures will be removed at the surgeon's discretion three to seven days post operatively. It is important not to stoop or carry out vigorous activities for two or three days, otherwise postoperative bleeding could result. The eyelids should be gently splashed with water and not rubbed in any way. It is advisable to apply antibiotic eye ointment for three or four days and eye makeup should not be used for the first week or two. You may also be comfortable using artificial tears for the first few days. Discomfort around the eyelids following surgery may be controlled by mild analgesics such as Paracetamol (Aspirin must be avoided).

The scars may appear pink for some weeks, occasionally months, although they are easily disguised with makeup. The scars in the 'crow's feet' area may become lumpy for a period but these invariably flatten with a period of time. This may be helped by gentle massage, starting three to four weeks post operatively. Complications after blepharoplasty are rare. Most are temporary i.e. excess tears or abnormal pigmentation of the eyelid skin. As after any surgery, bleeding and infection can occur. Bleeding might require a return to the operating theatre to avoid damage to the eye, whilst an infection is usually readily treated with antibiotics. Occasionally, what appears to be a transparent sack of fluid develops and covers part of the eye. This looks quite frightening but you should not be alarmed as this will not settle on its own. A scratch on the cornea (surface of the eyeball) while not serious, can be irritating and may take several days to heal.

Summary

Blepharoplasty is one of the most popular aesthetic plastic surgery procedures. The results are significant and give a freshened appearance to the eyes, however it rarely produces smooth, crease-free eyelids. Following blepharoplasty, you may not be able to wear contact lenses for some time and should discuss this possibility with your surgeon. Do bear in mind that you will require glasses of a suitable prescription during the early post-operative stage of your treatment and – most essential – a large pair of sunglasses.





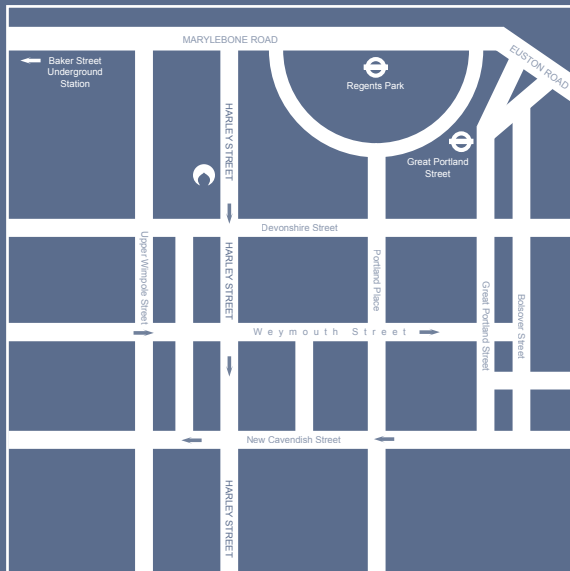
Ms Angelica Kavouni FRCS EBOPRAS Cosmetic Plastic Surgeon graduated from the medical school of Thessaloniki, Greece and continued her postgraduate studies at the University of Bristol Medical School on a scholarship from the Erasmus European Institute.

She trained in Plastic Surgery in London NHS Hospitals; following her certification by the European Board of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery she specialised in Cosmetic Surgery as a fellow at London's Institute of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery and then spent two more years working as an associate cosmetic surgeon to Mr Jan Stanek, a busy cosmetic surgeon. She completed her doctoral thesis (MD) on growth hormone and wound healing for the University of Thessaloniki.

On the General Medical Council specialist register in Plastic Surgery her qualifications include:

- Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England FRCS
- European Board of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery EBOPRAS
- Fellowship of the European Boards in Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery
- Membership of the Hellenic and International Federation of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery IPRAS

Personal: Ms Kavouni is married to a fellow Plastic Surgeon, is the busy mother of two small boys, but manages to find the time to enjoy tennis, winter skiing and actively supports the WRVS amongst other charities.



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