

Ask the Plastic Surgeons

By Wendell Smoot, MD, FACS, and Dr. John Smoot, MD, FACS

Q. My friends keep telling me I look tired, but I'm fully rested and in great physical shape; what can I do to make my face look more energetic without a significant investment or lengthy recovery period?

A. We are frequently asked this question of patients who visit our practice for a consultation and there are two procedures we often recommend that provide excellent results within a budget and relatively short down time.

The first is a Brow Lift, which is a procedure that removes sagging skin and lifts the brow. Patients who look tired, angry, or sad because of the furrows in their brow or droopy skin that sags over the eyes are the best candidates for brow lift. A traditional brow lift requires an incision across the top of the forehead. An endoscopic brow lift uses newer technology and requires much smaller incisions.

After the incisions are made, the plastic surgeon will reposition the muscles that cause frown lines, removing tissue as necessary. Brow lift patients will need to elevate their head for two or three days after surgery to aid healing and minimize swelling. The swelling that does occur should begin to subside within a week. After a brow lift, patients will find that their frown lines are minimized, and that they look rested and content.

The other procedure we often perform in conjunction with a Brow Lift is an Eyelid Lift, or blepharoplasty, which removes excess fat and skin from the upper and lower eyelids. The result of this type of surgery is correction of drooping eyelids and reduction in the size of under-eye bags. Patients with baggy eyelids are generally considered to be good candidates for blepharoplasty. The need for eyelid surgery becomes medical rather than purely cosmetic if sagging eyelids obscure vision. We also perform blepharoplasty for people with puffy bags or permanent dark circles under their eyes, caused by excess fat and skin in the area.

The incision for blepharoplasty is made along the upper eyelid's natural crease, thus minimizing the appearance of any scarring. If the lower eyelid is to be treated, the incision is made just below the lower eyelashes. The plastic surgeon will remove any excess fat beneath the skin and, if necessary, tighten the muscles responsible for holding the eyelid in place. In most cases, blepharoplasty for both the upper and lower eyelids takes no longer than 90 minutes.



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Because the skin around the eyelids is rather thin and sensitive, swelling and bruising are common. These effects of blepharoplasty tend to subside 10 days to two weeks after surgery. Patients will experience smoother eyelids and reduction of under-eye bags, resulting in the entire face looking brighter, younger, and more alert.

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