

When should I contact the department?

If you have any problems with your vision

If your eye becomes red or painful

If you cannot close your eye properly

If you have bleeding from the wound or a profuse sticky discharge.

The department itself is open from 8am-6pm Monday to Friday, and 8.30am-6pm on weekends and bank holidays.

For further information and advice please contact:

Acute Referral Clinic Helpline: **0300 019 4181** seven days a week:
8am-6pm Monday to Friday, 8.30am-6pm on Saturdays and
8.30am-2pm on Sundays.




ptosis

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The Eye Unit Patient Information

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This leaflet is for patients who have a problem with drooping of their eyelid and aims to answer some of the questions commonly asked.

What is Ptosis?

Ptosis (pronounced 'toe-sis') is the medical term for drooping of one or both upper eyelids. When the eyelid droops it blocks the upper part of your vision and you may be unhappy with the appearance of your eye.

What causes Ptosis?

In most cases Ptosis is age related. The tendon that attaches the 'lifting' muscle to the eyelid stretches and the eyelid droops. Occasionally the Ptosis is related to other conditions which your doctor will discuss with you.

What is the treatment and how is it done?

The treatment for Ptosis is surgery to strengthen the eyelid lifting muscle and is usually carried out under local anaesthetic (you will be awake). You can usually go home on the same day. Local anaesthetic drops are used along with an injection into the upper eyelid to numb the area.

How will the operation help?

The operation will lift your eyelid back to a more normal position and improve the quality of your vision if the drooping eyelid was causing the problem.

What to expect after the operation

An eye dressing is usually applied for 24 hours. The upper eyelid will be swollen and bruised, which settles within about two weeks. Make sure the wound is kept clean and dry. There may be a small amount of discharge from the wound and, if necessary, you may clean it gently using cooled, boiled water and clean gauze or tissue. Use a separate gauze or tissue for each wipe to the area.

You can also use a cool compress to reduce the swelling more quickly (see How do I carry out a cool compress? below).

You will be prescribed an antibiotic eye ointment, which you should apply to the wound as directed, normally twice a day for seven days.

If there are any specific instructions, your surgeon will let you know following surgery.

You will be asked to return to the Eye Unit for a follow up appointment about one week after the surgery to check your eye is healing well.

Are there any risks or side effects?

Most patients are pleased with the results of surgery and have no serious complications.

The stitch in your eyelid may break. Usually this is not a concern, but if the wound then gapes open, please contact the department.

There is normally very little discomfort following eyelid surgery, but use simple painkillers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen as required.

There is a small risk of infection of the eyelid or the eye.

There is a possibility that the eyelid may be too high or too low and in a few cases, more operations may be needed.

The eyelid may also appear uneven.

If your eyelid is too high, but you can still close the eye, you can try eyelash traction (see below).

Ptosis often affects both eyes, drooping in the other eye may be more noticeable after surgery so you may need to have the other eyelid operated on.

Rarely, you may have an allergic reaction to the local anaesthetic injection, to the suture material or to the antibiotic ointment.

Eyelash traction

If the eyelid appears too high in straight gaze with your eyebrows relaxed (i.e. the white of your eye is showing) you may try eyelash traction. Look downwards and grip your eyelashes, then look upwards while continuing to grip your lashes. This will gently pull on the wound and allow the scar to stretch slightly. Please check with your surgeon first.

How do I carry out a cool compress to reduce swelling?

If your eye lid becomes very swollen a cool compress will help relieve the swelling.

Wash your hands, then boil about 100ml of water, and put it into a clean jug. Once it is cool, put it in the fridge and leave it to further cool for about an hour. Use this to moisten a clean face cloth or sterile gauze and press this gently over the wound for ten to fifteen minutes. Alternatively, a cooled gel pad may be used. This process can be repeated if needed. Alternatively a cooled gel pad may be used.