

# Do I Have Droopy Eyelids?



Ptosis and blepharoplasty surgery is done to correct droopy eyelids. Droopy lids have three main causes and the cause for the appearance of drooping lids will determine the surgical procedure to correct the abnormality. The three categories consist of excess skin above the eyes (upper lids), drooping eyebrows (brow ptosis) or upper eyelid droop (ptosis). If the extra skin in the upper lid is hanging down, blepharoplasty is the surgical procedure to remove the excess skin. If the eyebrow is drooping, brow lifting is the surgical procedure of correction. If the upper eyelid itself is drooping, the muscle inside the eyelid must be strengthened and this surgical procedure is called ptosis surgery. It is very important that you and Dr. Sneed discuss and have an understanding of what is causing your particular problem and what surgical procedure or procedures will correct your problem. Understanding the expectations and realities of surgery is critical to your success.

People in general are not symmetrical. One leg may be longer or one foot wider than the other. The same is true with our eyelids and eyebrows. Whereas perfect symmetry is the goal with eyelid and eyebrow surgery, this does not always occur because in most patients we are starting with slight asymmetry and contour differences.

As with any surgical procedure, there may be complications. The potential complications include, but are not limited to, bleeding, infection, inflammation, loss of vision, or additional surgery to correct some asymmetry. Care taken before, during and after surgery helps minimize the chances of these complications. To minimize the chance of serious bleeding during or after surgery all blood thinning medicines and over the counter supplements, which thin your blood, should be stopped 7-10 days before surgery unless they are deemed necessary by your primary care physician or specialist.

## Initial Consultation

On your initial visit with Dr. Sneed, you will have testing and photographs to determine whether or not your insurance will cover your surgery. Sometimes, this information needs to be submitted to your insurance company for pre-approval.

*Continued* ▲



Bringing you  
the latest  
in technology  
to help you see  
more clearly.

929 Business Park Drive  
Traverse City, Michigan 49686  
231.947.6246 • 800.968.6612

511 Ashmun St.  
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783  
906.635.9802 • 800.824.2711

2061 M-119  
Petoskey, MI 49770  
231.487.2020 • 866.407.2020

See for yourself. [www.gtoc.net](http://www.gtoc.net)  
  
GRAND TRAVERSE OPHTHALMOLOGY CLINIC

*Continued* ▲

Dr. Sneed will review the surgical procedure which will best help to correct your eyelid problems. Costs and insurance coverage varies from patient to patient and will be addressed individually with you by our staff members trained in this field. It is important that you understand your insurance coverage for eyelid surgery and this information is available from your insurance company. If it is determined that surgery is needed, you will see our surgery scheduler and a date for your surgery will be set before you leave the office. She will also review all pre-operative criteria including diet restrictions, pre-surgical physical exams and any necessary tests from your primary care physician. You will be given a prescription for medication needed after surgery.

## Day of Surgery

If it is determined that your surgery will be performed in the office, you will come to the office approximately 30 minutes before your surgery time. Occasionally, we will give relaxing medication such as Valium before surgery. If indicated in your situation, you should arrive approximately 45 minutes before surgery. This gives ample time for the medication to take effect in your system before surgery. If surgery is to be done in the hospital or ambulatory surgery center (ASC), you will need some pre-operative testing and will not be able to eat or drink anything other than a sip of water with medication from midnight before surgery. You will be given medicine to help you relax, but you will be awake during your procedure because Dr. Sneed needs to check the position of your eyelids from time to time during the surgery. Dr. Sneed will mark lines on your eyelids corresponding with the operative site and you will have an injection of local anesthetic which will numb the operative sites. Your skin will then be cleansed with betadine and sterile drapes will be placed to keep the operative site clean. An incision will be made by either a scalpel or electrocautery needle. Excess skin is removed and if the eyelid muscle needs to be strengthened, that is done at this time. Because symmetry of the eyelids is important, care is taken to position the eyelids so they are even. Despite this, 10-15% of the time, there is some asymmetry of the eyelids after surgery. If one of the lids is too high or too low, adjustments can be made at your postoperative visit with Dr. Sneed. Fortunately, 85-90% of the time the eyelids are symmetrical and no adjustments need to be made. The eyelid skin is sewn together, usually with sutures that dissolve in 5-7 days. Eyebrow surgery usually requires sutures that will be removed 10 days after surgery. The actual surgery time takes 45-60 minutes but you will be at the office or ASC for about two hours on the day of your surgery. You will need someone to drive you home after surgery, and this is the case with surgery done in both the office and ASC. An instruction sheet outlining your post-operative care and appointments will be given to you.

## Post-operative care and expectations

Immediately after surgery, ice and mild pressure over the eyelids will help in minimizing bruising and swelling. For a couple of hours after surgery, as the local anesthetic is wearing off, you may have mild discomfort. This is treated with Tylenol or extra strength Tylenol. If you are on prescription blood thinners, these can usually be restarted 1-2 days after surgery. Dr. Sneed will review any specific medication questions with you. Eating fresh pineapple for 3-4 days after surgery helps the bruising and swelling go away more quickly. Fresh pineapple has an enzyme called bromelain. This enzyme helps break down blood products in the body and shortens the time you would be black and blue. For ptosis surgery, where the eyelid muscle is strengthened, you will be seen by Dr. Sneed about 5 days after surgery. As discussed earlier, sometimes adjustment in the eyelid position is necessary. This can be done at this first post-operative visit before any scar tissue has formed. If blepharoplasty is done, your appointment is usually 7-10 days after surgery as no immediate adjustment is ever needed. Swelling and bruising is usually present for 10-14 days but may be a bit shorter or longer. Dr. Sneed typically sees patients for one more visit 2 months after the procedure once things have stabilized and are back to normal. Any unexpected problems after surgery will be addressed at any time by Dr. Sneed. Phone numbers and contact methods will be reviewed before and after your surgery. Please ask any questions at your visit to GTOC.



Dr Peter Sneed

Eye  
Plastic  
Surgery  
at  
GTOC

Peter J. Sneed, M.D. has fellowship training in eye plastic surgery from the Wills Eye Hospital and is board certified in both the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Oculoplastic and Reconstructive Surgeons.