

Common Eyelid Problems

Eyelids protect the eyes from dust and dirt. They keep the eyes covered during sleep and protect them by voluntary and involuntary blinking when the body senses that the eyes are threatened. They also help prevent the eyes from drying out by distributing tears over the eye surface.

What Are Some Common Eyelid Problems?

Some common conditions of the eyelids include ptosis, entropion, ectropion, epiblepharon and “lumps and bumps”.

Ptosis or Droopy Eyelids

With ptosis, the upper eyelid is in an abnormally low position drooping over the eye. The most common causes of this are age-related, due to injuries to the eye or the prolonged use of contact lenses. If your eyelids block your vision significantly, surgery is recommended to correct the condition. This is the most effective solution available for ptosis.

Ptosis can also be a congenital problem from birth. If a child has droopy eyelids, his condition should be treated early to avoid the development of visual problems such as permanent “lazy eye” (amblyopia) or astigmatism.

Dermatochalasis Or Baggy Eyes

Baggy eyes commonly occur as we age and can affect both the upper and lower eyelids. As the area around the eye ages, tissues stretch and lose their elasticity, causing them to become ‘baggy’.

The bagginess around the eyes can be reduced by a simple day surgery procedure known as blepharoplasty. This will improve both the function and the appearance of the eyelids.

Your eye surgeon will assess your eyelids and determine whether your condition is a medically indicated problem that affects the function of the eye, or a cosmetic procedure.

Entropion

Entropion is a condition where the eyelid turns inwards, causing the eyelashes to rub against the delicate cornea. This is most often seen as an age-related change, although it can also be the result of eyelid scarring caused by infections or burns. The eyelid structures become stretched and weakened.

Entropion irritates the eye, making it itchy, sore and teary. If left untreated, it can lead to infections of the cornea and irreversible scarring.

You can correct both upper and lower lid entropion conditions by tightening the eyelid with various surgical procedures.

Epiblepharon

Often affecting children and young adults of East Asian origin (Chinese, Japanese and Koreans), epiblepharon is where the lower and sometimes upper eyelashes are pushed inwards by an excess fold of eyelid skin.

This irritates the cornea, causing tearing, redness and itching. With the help of lubrication, epiblepharon sometimes resolves itself as the child grows older. However, surgery is not uncommon and may be required if the symptoms are unbearable.

Lumps And Bumps

These are common features and can be either benign or malignant tumours.

Frequent lumps and bumps include styes, cysts and moles which can be easily treated. For the elderly, a sudden appearance or progression of an existing lump should be examined to rule out any possible indication of malignant cancer.

What Will Happen During The Surgery?

Most of these conditions can be treated successfully by a minor eye surgery. These are often performed as day surgery with no need for hospitalisation. The majority are performed under local anaesthesia for adults and general anaesthesia for children.

There may be some mild inflammation and discomfort in the days following your operation and this should be managed with some basic care, i.e. gently cleanse the area once a day and apply an antibiotic ointment 2 to 3 times a day.

Most patients can return to work within 1 to 2 weeks, and stitches are normally removed 5 to 7 days after surgery.

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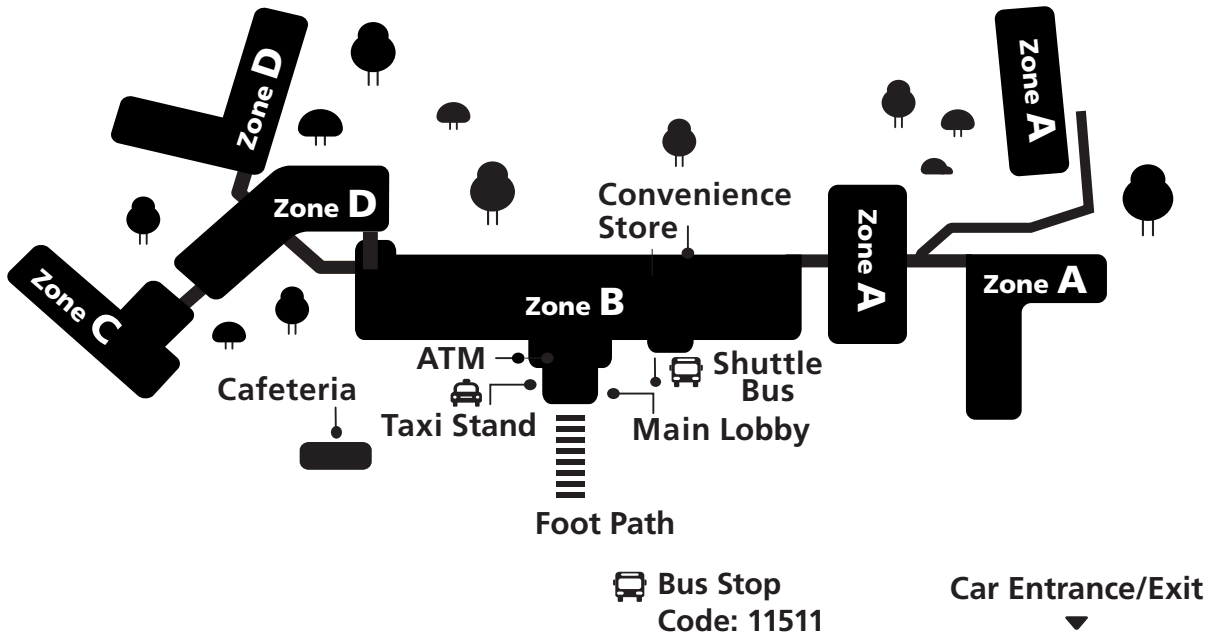
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