Ptosis Surgery
(Surgery to Repair a Droopy Upper Eyelid)

Ptosis is drooping of an eyelid, usually the upper eyelid. When the lower eyelid is droopy and turns outward, the condition is called ectropion. Ptosis is common in the elderly, but also may be present at birth (*congenital*). Or it may be due to many other disorders, diseases, or injuries. Ptosis may occur in one or both upper eyelids.

CAUSES

- **Aging.** With age, the muscles that hold the eyelid up may become weak, causing one or both upper eyelids to droop.
- **Trauma.** Injury can cause damage to the nerve that controls the upper eyelid muscle or to the muscle itself.
- **Previous eye surgery.** Ptosis is often seen after eye surgery, even if the eyelid itself was not operated on.
- **Myasthenia Gravis.** This is a disease that causes weakening of the body's muscles, as they tire.
- **Horner's Syndrome.** A combination of findings that can be from nerve damage, present at birth, or from unknown causes. With Horner Syndrome, one upper eyelid is droopy and the pupil (*black circle*) on the same side is smaller.
- **Bell's Palsy** (appears like Ptosis of the opposite eye). Bell's palsy can occur from a virus infection or for unknown reasons. In this condition, one side of the face droops, including the cheek and side of the mouth. Usually, a person with Bell's Palsy cannot shut the eye on the affected side, so that eye must be watched very carefully for permanent damage that can happen from exposure. In Bell's palsy, the eye on the weakened side is actually more open than the eye on the unaffected side, making the normal eye look like it may be droopy. This is a "false ptosis."
- **Unknown causes.**
- **Blepharochalsis.** This is due to age and too much skin on the upper eyelids. It is not a true ptosis. The extra skin weighs the upper lids down and hangs over the eyelid margin, covering the upper part of the eye.
- **Eyelid tumors.**
- **Brain tumors.**
- **Tumors behind the eye**, in the eye socket.
- **Diabetes.**
- **Certain toxins** or snake venoms.
- **Certain drugs.**

TREATMENT

The treatment of ptosis depends on its cause. In acquired ptosis (*developing in a previously normal eyelid*) a full medical evaluation must be done to discover the cause.

The treatment of this condition requires an operation, or treatment for the disease that caused the condition. If surgery is suggested, there are several types of surgery. Your eye surgeon will explain the advantages and disadvantages of each.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

After surgery, if a dressing was applied, this may be changed once per day or as instructed. Your caregiver will instruct you in your wound care.

- If eye drops or ointment was prescribed, use as directed for the full time directed.
- If your eye becomes more red and swollen with use of medicines, let your caregiver know. This could be an allergic reaction.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have a drooping upper eyelid that has developed suddenly, or over a short period of time, with or without other symptoms.

After surgery:

- There is increasing redness, swelling, or pain in the wound or around the eye.
- Pus is coming from the wound.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- The wound breaks open (*edges not staying together*) after stitches (*sutures*) have been removed.
- There is a change in your vision.

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