



*Brow Lift*

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**change**  
COSMETIC SURGERY

## *General information*

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A brow lift is performed to rejuvenate the forehead. Its effect is on the upper part of the face – i.e. above the eyes. More specifically it tightens and smoothes the skin of the forehead and lifts the eyebrows. It is possible to combine a brow lift with other facial surgery, such as blepharoplasty (eye-lids), rhinoplasty (nose), or facelift.

The operation involves the release of the forehead, tightening it and repositioning the skin and eyebrows, which have sagged down with age. This leaves a number of short scars in the hair above the forehead and ears.

There are variations of the brow lift and these may or may not be appropriate for you. These include the lateral or temporal brow lift, the bicoronal open brow lift and the endoscopic brow lift. The latter is the most commonly used technique.

## *Preparation for surgery*

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Smoking can cause problems with wound healing and increase your risk of a chest infection following general anaesthetic. You must not smoke for at least four weeks before your operation and for four weeks after it.

Please, only take medication prescribed by your doctor for the two weeks before and two weeks after your operation. In particular, herbal, homeopathic and nutritional supplements (including vitamin E capsules) may contain substances that increase your risk of bleeding and cause sun sensitivity.

Aspirin, and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) increase your risk of bleeding. You should avoid all such medicines for two weeks before and two weeks after your operation. If you are concerned, please check with your GP that it is safe to do so. In certain specific circumstances, you may be prescribed a NSAID

for your post-operative pain, which you should take as directed.

If you drink alcohol, it is best to drink only a small amount for the week before the operation and for the first two weeks of your recovery. You should avoid it altogether if you are taking antibiotics or strong pain medication.

Your recovery after the operation will be easier if you are fit and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Regular exercise will help you cope with the operation better.

If you feel unwell leading up to your operation please inform our secretary, as it may be best to reschedule your operation for when you are well.

Do not have surgery if you may be pregnant.

## *The operation*

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Please come for your operation in loose-fitting clothing that can be easily and comfortably removed. Slip-on shoes are best, as bending over must be avoided after your surgery. Avoid nail varnish and heavy make-up. Rings, earrings and body-piercings should be removed at home. Bring your normal medication with you and a sufficient supply for the duration of your anticipated stay in hospital. Someone should accompany you to the hospital and home when you leave hospital.

The operation is performed under general anaesthesia (asleep). You should expect to be in hospital for one to two nights. You may have one or two drains. Getting up and about after the operation is important although it will be uncomfortable to start with. You should try to do this as soon as possible.

## *Care after your surgery*

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You will have a firm bandage around your head. This will be removed on the day following your surgery. You may have some stitches or clips that will need to be removed after a few days.

Avoid rubbing or disturbing the area while they are in place. You may start to shower your hair and face after removal of your drains, unless specifically advised not to, but do not soak it in water. Dry it gently by dabbing with a soft towel. Avoid heavy make-up to the face while you are recovering. There may be a light dressing for a few days if you have had drains removed. This can be stopped once there is no longer any staining on the dressing.

After two weeks, provided that your scars are healed and dry, start to massage them with the shampoo and conditioner when washing your hair.

All scars should be protected from the sun for the first year after surgery. Ideally they should be shaded from the sun with a hat or scarf. Sun exposure of a fresh scar can cause permanent discolouration, resulting in a darkened, visible scar.

You should avoid becoming constipated after your surgery. If you are prone to this then you must take a stool softener during your recovery.

## *What to expect after your surgery*

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You will have a few short scars in your hair between your ears. These may become red and slightly raised during the early period of healing. It takes a few months for the scars to settle fully and massage can aid this process, once it is comfortable enough to do so. Your scalp and forehead may feel numb but this will gradually recover over a few months. During this time you must avoid contact with hot things, such as a hot water bottle, as there is a risk of being burned. Your forehead will be bruised and swollen, it will feel tight at first and you will experience headache as well as some generalised pain and discomfort. This will settle in the first few weeks after surgery. You must sleep with your head and shoulders well propped-up by pillows in bed

for the first two weeks. Please take your pain medication as directed until you are able to move about comfortably.

A follow-up appointment will be arranged for you when you leave hospital.

## *Driving and activity*

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After your surgery, you must not bend over or lift heavy objects for the first two weeks. All heavy and strenuous activity should be avoided for the first few weeks after your surgery. Graduated activity and exercise can then be started with full, unrestricted activity after twelve weeks, as your comfort allows. You will be able to start driving again when you feel comfortable and are safe doing so. This is usually between two and four weeks. Some car insurance companies have guidelines for driving after surgery and it is always best to check with your own company whether there are any restrictions imposed on you.

## *Complications*

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Although complications are uncommon, problems may occur as a result of your surgery. These can result in prolonged recovery but may also have an adverse effect on your final result. These include poor scarring (including keloid), bleeding, infection, delayed healing, wound breakdown, fluid collection, persistent numbness or pain, and asymmetry or unevenness. Further surgery may be necessary to correct some of these, should they occur. A charge may have to be made for any additional treatment. Some patients experience strange sensations over their scalp afterwards, such as running water. Should this occur, then it will gradually settle and no specific treatment is required. There is also a small risk of developing a venous thrombosis (DVT), although measures are taken to minimise this risk.

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## *Additional comments*

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If you have any questions about the information contained in this leaflet or you do not understand something that is included in it, please contact our secretary for clarification.

If you are concerned about your recovery, have bleeding, feel unwell or have increasing pain then please contact Clare Park Hospital where your surgery was performed, our secretary (during office hours), your local A+E Department, or your GP.

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