

Mr Anthony G Tyers

FRCS FRCSEd FRCOphth

New Hall Hospital Bodenham Salisbury Wiltshire SP5 4EY

Secretary tel: 01722 439680/422333 fax: 01722 410143

BROW SUSPENSION SURGERY FOR PTOSIS

Q *What is meant by brow suspension?*

A Fine bands of plastic, or material taken from the side of the thigh, are inserted beneath the skin of the eyelids and brows to "suspend" the eyelids to the muscles in the forehead.

Q *When is brow suspension surgery needed?*

A When the muscles which lift the eyelids are seriously weakened so that they cannot provide adequate lift to the upper lids a brow suspension operation is the best choice.

Q *What materials are used?*

A There is a choice of two types of material. In very young children (under 4 years old) and in some types of ptosis in middle age a fine silicone band is used. In children aged 4 or more the best material is "fascia lata". This is taken from the thigh. The scar in the leg is about 2-3 inches long and it is placed just above the knee on the outer side of the thigh. It heals well but it can be rather pink or purple for many months until it gradually fades leaving a white scar.

Q *How successful is brow suspension surgery?*

A Usually very successful. Less than 10% need further adjustment after the first operation.

Q *What are the complications of brow suspension surgery?*

A Because of the way the surgery works the eyes are often a little open during sleep at night. In addition, when the eyes are looking down the eyelids tend to remain slightly higher than usual, or "hang up", rather than follow the eyes fully. Occasionally, particularly in adults who have brow suspension surgery, the eyes can become rather dry and uncomfortable. Lubricant eye drops may then be needed, usually for only a few weeks.

Q *If only one upper lid requires a brow suspension, is the surgery ever performed on the normal side as well?*

A Yes - the aim of all surgery in the face is to produce symmetry between the right and left sides. As mentioned above, brow suspension surgery causes the treated lid to "hang up" and this leads to asymmetry if the other upper lid is moving normally. A better cosmetic appearance is often achieved if the surgery is performed on the normal side as well. It is not essential however and the final choice will always be yours. It will be discussed fully with you if it may be beneficial.

Q Will the upper lids droop again after brow suspension surgery?

A When fascia lata (from the thigh) is used the lids usually remain at a good level permanently. When a silicone band is used it is common for the lids to drop a little after several months. In adults it is usually preferable simply to tighten the band to correct the droopy lid. In very young children however it is usually better to wait until the age of 4 is reached and then to remove the band and repeat the operation using fascia lata.

*Further copies of this and other Information Sheets can be downloaded
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