



ADVANCED SPECIALTY CARE, P.C.

What You Need to Know About an Upper Eyelid Lift

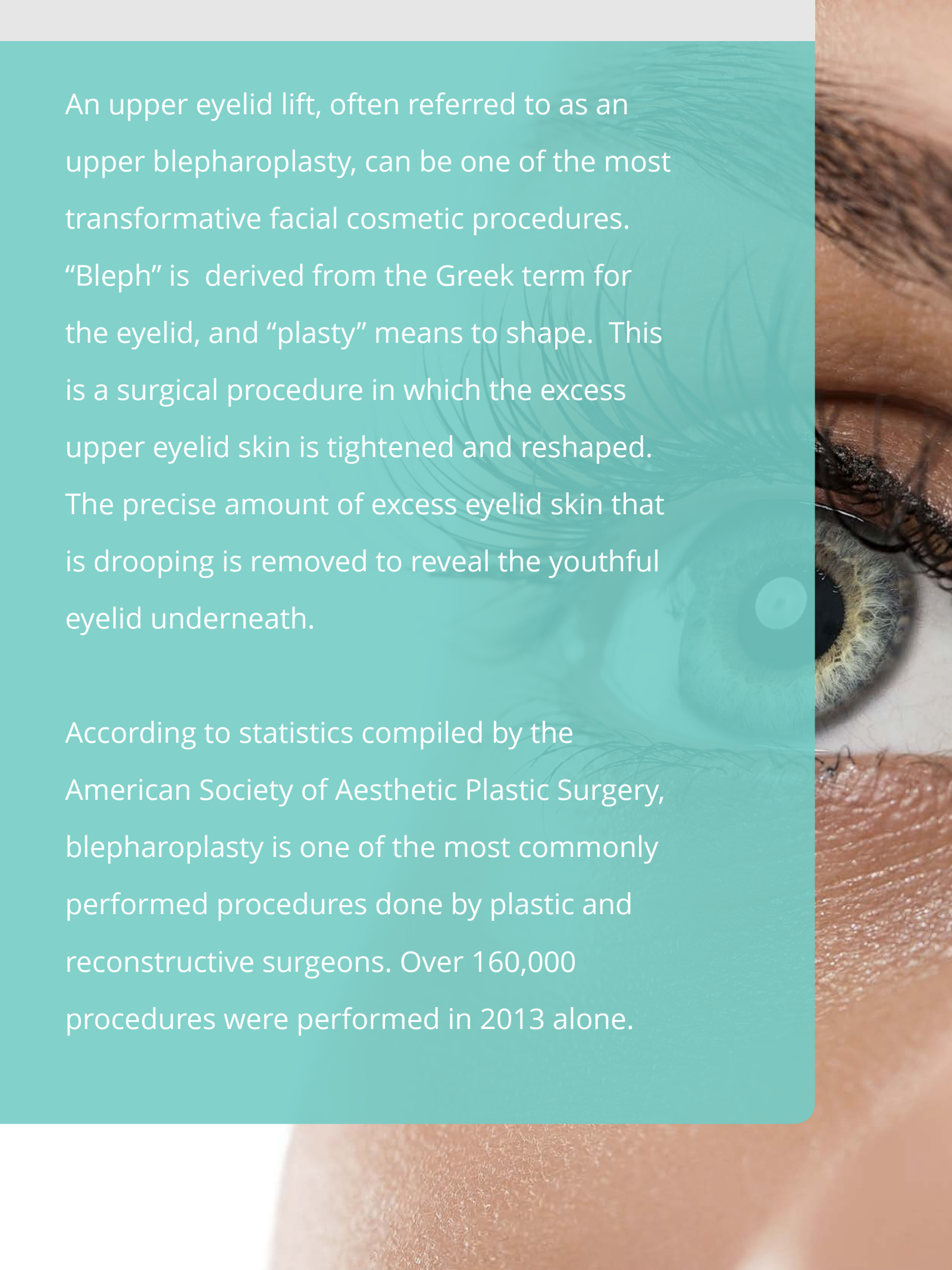
By Dr. Prashant Soni

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A close-up photograph of a human eye, showing the iris, eyelashes, and skin. A semi-transparent teal rectangular overlay covers the left and center portions of the image, serving as a background for the text.

An upper eyelid lift, often referred to as an upper blepharoplasty, can be one of the most transformative facial cosmetic procedures.

“Bleph” is derived from the Greek term for the eyelid, and “plasty” means to shape. This is a surgical procedure in which the excess upper eyelid skin is tightened and reshaped. The precise amount of excess eyelid skin that is drooping is removed to reveal the youthful eyelid underneath.

According to statistics compiled by the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, blepharoplasty is one of the most commonly performed procedures done by plastic and reconstructive surgeons. Over 160,000 procedures were performed in 2013 alone.

Who can benefit from this type of procedure?

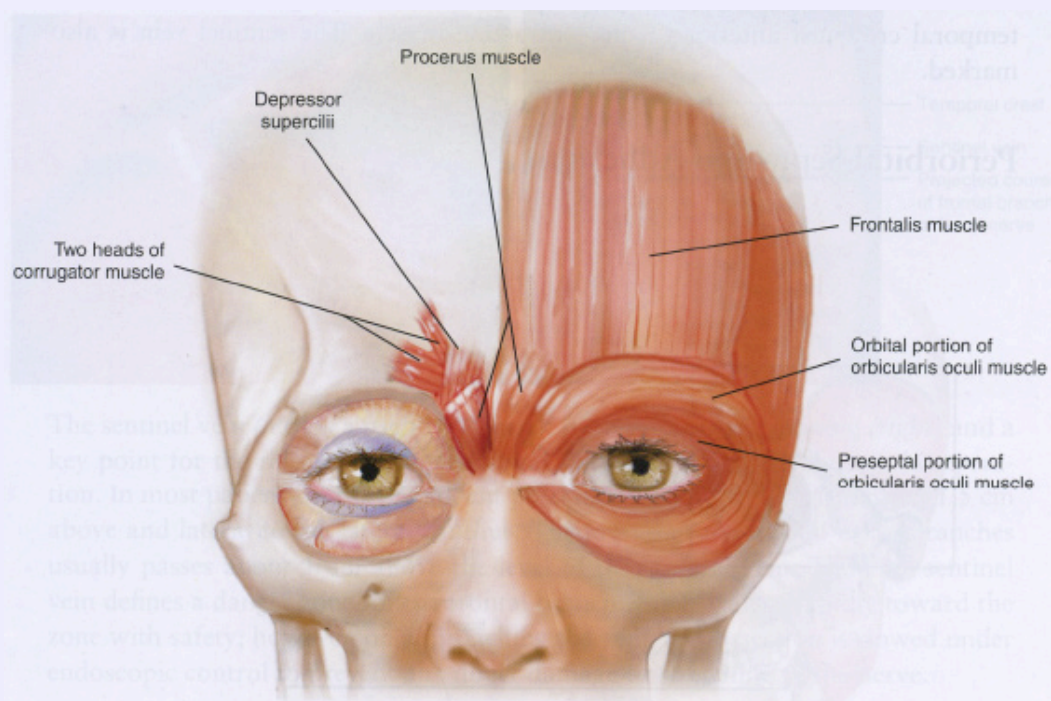
People who may benefit from a blepharoplasty commonly complain that they have a constant tired appearance. They are often asked by friends if they are in a bad mood, even if they are happy. Usually, it's the appearance of the eyes that convey this image. A drooping look of the upper eyelids makes nearly everyone look and feel older. Both men and women are eventually affected by this condition and can benefit from this procedure.



What causes the upper eyelid skin to droop?

The underlying cause relates to the muscles that surround the eyelids. The orbicularis oculi muscle is a circular muscle that surrounds the upper and lower eyelids. Its function is to blink the eyelids and to draw the eyebrow downward when we smile or frown. A lifetime of pulling the brow down and blinking gradually stretches the skin of the upper eyelid and also causes the outer eyebrows to droop. When this will happen is genetically programmed, but it is inevitable in almost everyone.

Some people have a condition called blepharoptosis. This is often known as a lazy eyelid, and is due to a weakening of the eyelid muscle called the levator aponeurosis. This muscle is responsible for opening the upper eyelid. Weakness of this muscle prevents complete and symmetrical opening of the eyelids. This problem is occasionally seen along with excessive eyelid skin. It is treated by tightening the weakened muscle simultaneously with upper eyelid skin removal.



Do the eyebrows need to be lifted as well in every case?

There have been many changes in the way an upper blepharoplasty has been performed over the years. These adjustments are in response to changes in society's concept of beauty. People no longer wish to have the highly arched brows that were typical of celebrities from previous generations. Consequently, brow lifts are needed less frequently. A mild to moderate brow lift is often accomplished with Botox injections before or after an upper blepharoplasty. In this way, you can get just the right amount of brow lifting desired with absolutely no surgery or down time. However, in severe cases of eyebrow drooping, a small lateral brow lift can be performed through an incision placed in the hairline. This is often done in conjunction with the upper blepharoplasty.



Marlene Dietrich:

The highly arched eyebrows and deep-set eyes epitomized the cosmetic ideal in the 1930s to 1950's. It is known as the "Max Factor" look. Today, people desire a much more subtle look after an upper eyelid lift.

How do you obtain a natural look?

Right from the start, it's important for the surgeon to have an understanding of what their patient desires. This can be accomplished by showing numerous actual before and after photos of actual patients operated on to find a set of pictures that are reflective of the person's pre-operative appearance and post-operative wishes. The surgeon may also ask to see pictures of the person from his or her youth. A properly performed upper blepharoplasty will help restore a person's normal appearance. It should not make someone look different than his or her anatomy allows.

Often, by incorporating other non-surgical procedures, the doctor can tailor individual results. Botox is very effective in adjusting the brow height to further enhance the new eyelid shape. A small amount can be used to effectively raise the outer eyebrow. Treatments done between the eyebrows in an area called the glabella decrease frown lines. Botox relaxes the muscles that are trying to pull the brow down, which would eventually create more eyelid drooping over time. In this way, it helps maintain the results of the eyelid lift for decades.

Preservation of the fat that naturally pads the skin under the eyelids is a hallmark of the modern day upper blepharoplasty. Many surgeons still remove a significant amount of fat and muscle from the upper eyelids. This creates the highly feminizing and unnatural look we sometimes see in celebrity photos. Less is more.

How do you obtain a natural look? (continue)

Many surgeons still only mark their patients while flat on the operating room table. It is valuable to assess the correct amount of skin to be removed while the person is sitting up with their eyes closed. In this way, the actual amount of excess skin that exists between the eyebrows and the upper eyelid skin crease can be more precisely measured, allowing for a natural closure of the eyes.

Upper bleph alone



Upper bleph alone



Upper bleph with eyelid ptosis repair



Upper bleph with botox brow lift



Pictures of actual patients

Is there a difference in an upper eyelid lift for Asian eyes?

An upper blepharoplasty is a very common procedure in people of Asian descent, typically of Chinese or Japanese descent. The cardinal difference is a very low or nonexistent crease on the upper eyelid. There is often a larger amount of eyelid fat that makes the eyelid appear puffy. These anatomic differences result in an older appearance very early in the aging process. Blepharoplasty is performed slightly differently in these cases. Additional techniques are used to raise or create a new eyelid crease if one is absent. More liberal trimming of eyelid fat may also be necessary. Making changes to the baseline anatomy of the eyelid in these situations can greatly benefit the person's appearance.



Does insurance pay for this procedure?

Long after the cosmetic changes have already become apparent, the excess skin of the upper eyelids will begin to affect a person's vision. The weight of the eyelid skin can also cause an irritation called blepharitis. A visual field test is often performed to document this functional issue. If this test shows over a 30% reduction of normal peripheral vision caused by the drooping skin, insurance companies will likely cover an upper eyelid lift procedure.



What is the recovery like from an upper eyelid lift?

Expect mild discomfort for just a couple of days that is easily controlled with Tylenol or a mild narcotic. The stitches are removed in one week and makeup can be applied after this. Bruising is more or less gone by 7-10 days, but often is a little bit longer in patients who take aspirin or other blood thinners on a regular basis.

Contact lenses cannot be worn for 10 days, but eyeglasses can be worn immediately after the procedure. People with chronic dry eyes may need to keep their eyes moist with wetting drops for several days after surgery. Most people are ready to drive a car by the fourth day. Light exercise can be resumed after 10 days and high impact aerobics, yoga, and weight lifting after two weeks. The incision is mostly hidden within the existing upper lid crease and is not visible with the eyes open. The incision will continue to fade and lighten for several months after the surgery. These time frames are typical, but may be more or less depending on the person.

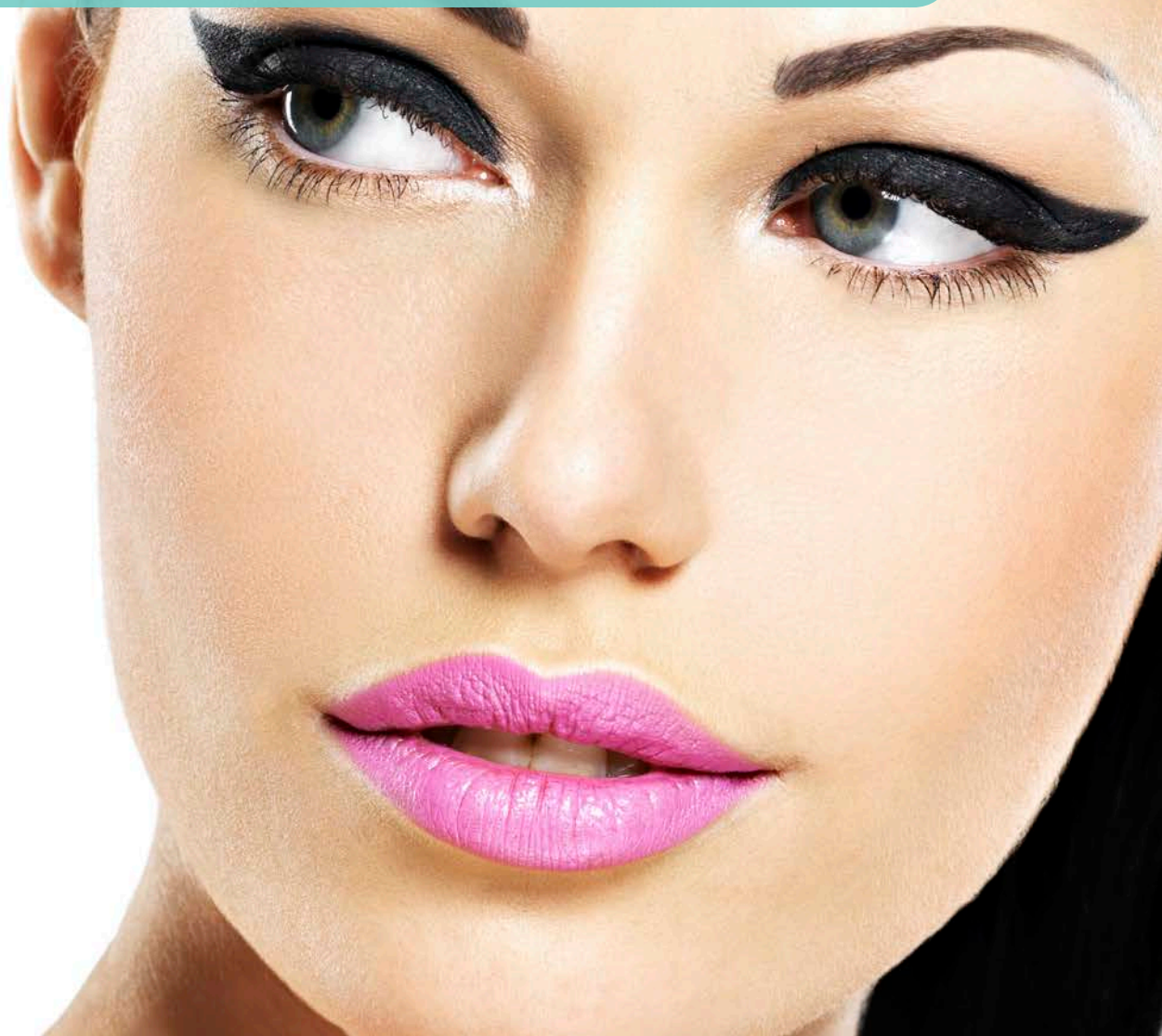


Where do you perform an upper eyelid lift procedure?

The vast majority of people have this procedure in a surgeon's office with local anesthesia alone. There is no need for any sedation. The procedure takes about one hour. People are required to have a ride home afterwards.

This surgery will be performed in the operating room if the person simply wishes to have sedation anyway or if it is being combined with other procedures such as a facelift, tummy tuck, etc. A drooping eyelid repair will also be performed in the operating room. All procedures done in the operating room should have either sedation or general anesthesia performed by a board certified anesthesiologist, and should be done in an OSHA certified operating facility.

Reducing sagging upper eyelids with an upper blepharoplasty whether to improve your sight or for cosmetic reasons can make a marked improvement in your appearance. As with any surgery, there are risks, and they should be fully discussed with your plastic surgeon before your consent.



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About Advanced Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery

Advanced Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery offers the newest and most sophisticated cosmetic surgery procedures for men and women, including neck and face lifts, eyelid surgery, rhinoplasty (nose surgery), liposuction, abdominoplasty (tummy tuck), breast augmentation, reduction or reconstruction, as well as Botox, Juvederm and other injectable fillers. All procedures are done by ASC surgeons Dr. David Goldenberg, Dr. Sohel Islam, Dr. Prashant Soni, and Dr. Julia Toto. ASC offices are located in the Fairfield County, CT towns of Danbury, New Milford, Norwalk, Ridgefield and Southbury.



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