



Gary S. Hirshfield, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Hirshfield Eye Associates
176-60 Union Turnpike
Fresh Meadows, NY 11366
Phone: 718-460-1200
Web site: www.newyorkcataract.com



Ptosis

Ptosis is drooping of the upper eyelid. The eyelid may droop only slightly or it may cover the pupil entirely. In some cases, ptosis can restrict and even block normal vision.

Ptosis in adults is commonly caused by separation of the levator muscle from the eyelid as a result of aging, cataract or other eye surgery, an injury, or an eye tumor. The most common cause is age related. Adult ptosis may also occur as a complication of other diseases such as diabetes that involve the levator muscle or its nerve supply.

Treatment is necessary only if the eyelid is blocking the vision. If treatment is necessary, it is usually surgical. Surgery can be performed if the upper part of the visual field is decreased as measured in a visual field test. Surgery can also be performed to improve the cosmetic appearance of a droopy eyelid but this will not usually be covered by insurance. Sometimes a small tuck in the levator muscle and eyelid can raise the lid sufficiently. More severe ptosis requires reattachment and strengthening of the levator muscle.

The risks of ptosis surgery include infection, bleeding, and reduced vision, but these complications occur very infrequently. Although improvement of the lid height is usually achieved, the eyelids may not appear perfectly symmetrical. In rare cases, full eyelid movement does not return.