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Informed Consent for Gold or Platinum Weight in Eyelid Surgery

What is a gold weight and how is it used?

Sometimes patients may have trouble closing their eyelids. The eye can become dry and damaged. This can happen after a stroke, surgery, trauma or other disease process. In order to help the patient close their eyes, a gold or platinum weight can be placed underneath the skin the eyelid. The weight of the gold or platinum helps the eyelid close once the patient attempts to close their eyes.

How will gold weight surgery affect my vision and appearance

The Gold weight surgery is not on the eye itself but is placed in the upper eyelid. The weight itself can sometimes change the eyeglass prescription of the patient because it puts pressure on the cornea. Often, this eyeglass prescription change is temporary but sometimes it can be permanent. By helping to close the eye more, the vision can be improved by reducing the dryness on the eyeball surface. Sometimes the gold weight can be visible underneath the skin where it is placed. This appearance can occur in older patients who may have thinner skin in their eyelid. The gold weight can also make the eyelid droopier and hang lower compared to the other eyelid. The gold weight uses gravity to close the eyelid so when the patient is sleeping, the eyelids may not close completely.

What are the major risks of gold weight surgery?

Risks of gold weight surgery, like most eyelid surgical procedures include but are not limited to: bleeding, scarring, infection, an asymmetric or unbalanced appearance, scarring, a “wide-eyed” or “open” appearance, droopy eyelid surgery, difficulty with or inability to wear contact lenses, double vision, tearing, scratches on the eye or corneal irritation or dry eye problems, numbness and/or tingling in the operated eyelid, near the eye, or on the face, and in rare cases, loss of vision. While gold weight surgery correction is usually permanent, the condition can recur. If it does, you may need to have repeat surgery. The result of gold weight surgery cannot be guaranteed. The gold weight is sized before surgery but sometimes the weight is too light or too heavy for the eyelid. Sometimes the gold weight can become infected and have to be removed. Some patients have difficulty adjusting to changes to their appearance. Some patients have unrealistic expectations about how changes in appearance will impact their lives. Carefully evaluate your goals, expectations and your ability to deal with changes to your appearance and the possible need for repeat surgery before agreeing to this surgery. Even with the gold weight, the patient may have to use drops and ointment. The eye still may not close completely with the gold weight in place especially when sleeping.

What are the alternatives to gold weight surgery?

There are several alternatives to gold weight surgery. The eyelid can be sewn shut in the corner to help it be more closed. The patient can use artificial tears or lubrication of the eye as often as every hour to help lubricate the eye. The eyelid can be lowered to help the eye be more closed. Botox injections can be given every three-four months to help close the eye. An eyelid spring can be placed in the eye instead of the gold weight.

What type of anesthesia is used and what are its risks

In children, general anesthesia is necessary. In teenagers and adults, gold weight surgery is usually performed on an outpatient basis under local anesthesia. The patient must be able to cooperate to some degree. Gold weight surgery with minimal (oral) sedation is desired in most cases. Some cases require sedation from a needle placed into a vein in your arm before surgery. Fortunately, even with no sedation, most patients do not find the operation to be very painful, and it only takes a short period of time. Risks of anesthesia, when administered, include but are not limited to damage to the eye and surrounding tissues and structures, loss of vision, breathing problems, and, in extremely rare circumstances, stroke or death.

Patient's acceptance of risks

I have read the above information and have discussed it with my physician. I understand that it is impossible for the physician to inform me of every possible complication that may occur. My physician has told me that results cannot be guaranteed and that adjustments and more surgery may be necessary. By signing below, I agree that my physician has answered all of my questions and that I understand and accept the risks, benefits, and alternatives of gold weight correction.

I consent to gold weight surgery on:

_____ Right eye _____ Left eye _____ Both eyes

_____ _____

Patient (or person authorized to sign for patient) Date