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**Lower Lid and Face:  
Multispecialty  
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REVIEWS

# Aesthetic Canthal Suspension

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## KEYWORDS

• Aesthetic canthal suspension • Canthopexy • Orbicularis sling • Canthoplasty

## KEY POINTS

- Aesthetic canthal suspension is defined as a lateral elevation of the lower eyelid, which may be completed as an independent procedure or more commonly in conjunction with aesthetic lower blepharoplasty.
- Indications for suspension of the lower eyelid include facial aging, laxity of the lower eyelid, and prevention of lower eyelid malposition.
- Preoperative evaluation of the lower eyelid and its position with respect to the globe and the cheek is key to optimal surgical management.
- Anatomy of the lower eyelid and lateral canthus is both intricate and complex; thorough understanding of anatomy is required to avoid complications in aesthetic canthal suspension.
- Canthopexy is defined as a procedure to elevate and support the lower eyelid to the lateral orbital rim with a plication suture without modification of the canthal tendon.
- Canthoplasty is defined as a procedure that modifies, tightens, and can shorten the lower eyelid, and may involve surgery on the lateral canthal tendon, tarsus, and orbicularis oculi.
- Risk of major complications of lower eyelid surgery including lower eyelid retraction and ectropion, may be reduced with aesthetic canthal suspension.

## OVERVIEW

Laxity of the lower eyelid is a common characteristic of facial aging, and correction of lower eyelid laxity in conjunction with aesthetic blepharoplasty is key to both an optimal cosmetic outcome and avoidance of surgical complications. Laxity of the lower eyelid is evaluated preoperatively with the snap-back test.<sup>1</sup> When lower eyelid blepharoplasty is completed with either a transcutaneous or transconjunctival technique, consideration must be given to the need for lower eyelid support to avoid potential complications including lower eyelid retraction and ectropion. With particular relevance to transcutaneous lower blepharoplasty, excision of lower eyelid skin without

consideration of canthal suspension results in an increased risk of lower eyelid retraction or malposition. Aesthetic canthal suspension may involve a single support suture to support the lower eyelid from the lateral orbital rim (canthopexy) or support of the lateral canthal tendon (canthoplasty), or tightening of the orbicularis oculi (orbicularis sling). Care is required in support and alteration of the lateral canthus, as small differences can be apparent with asymmetry or functional discomfort.

Oculoplastic surgeons have a good anatomic knowledge of this area, as reconstructive surgery on the lateral canthus is a common procedure. By contrast, other surgical specialties often find this area challenging because the anatomy is intricate

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