MR SIVA KUMAR

CONSULTANT PLASTIC SURGEON

PATIENT INFORMATION

Mini-bleph

CO2 laser eyelid tightening, also called the Madonna eyelift

Mr Siva Kumar Veeramani
Consultant Plastic, Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgeon
MBBS BMedSci MRCSEd MBA FRCSEd (Plast.) · GMC 6114710

The Ü Clinic
Sevenoaks & Oxted

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01 Why you have this booklet

You've been given this booklet because you have talked to Mr Kumar about a mini-bleph, or you're about to.

It explains what the treatment involves, who it suits, how to prepare, and the risks and recovery.

It won't answer every question, and it isn't a substitute for talking things through with Mr Kumar, so please note down anything you want to ask and bring it to your next appointment. There is space for your questions at the back.

02 What a mini-bleph involves

A mini-bleph, also called a Madonna eyelift, is fractional CO2 laser treatment to the upper and lower eyelids. It tightens and smooths the eyelid skin without any cutting or stitches.

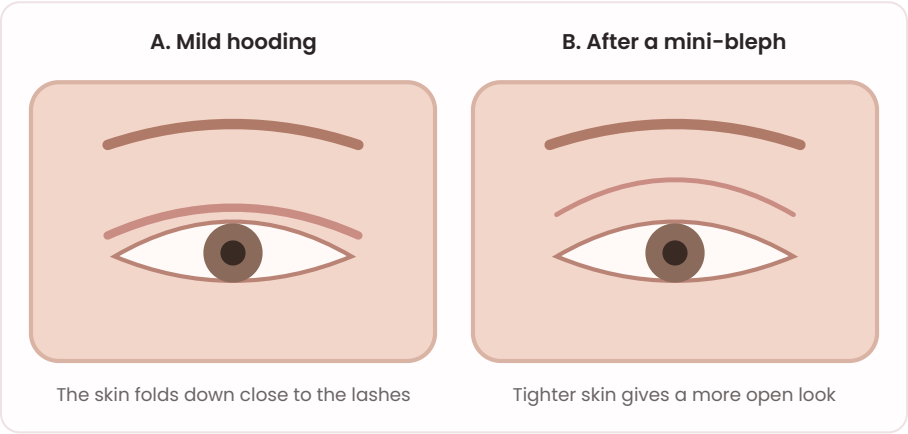

Figure 1. Mild hooding of the upper eyelid, before and after a mini-bleph. A simplified drawing for guidance only.

The laser treats thousands of tiny columns of skin. As it heals, new collagen forms and the skin tightens and smooths over the following months. It also improves crepey skin and fine lines around the eyes.

Who it suits

Earlier changes in younger people, anyone who would like a more modest change than surgery, and people who have had eyelid surgery before and want to maintain the result.

How it differs from a blepharoplasty

A blepharoplasty removes skin, and sometimes fat, through a fine incision. A mini-bleph doesn't remove anything, so it suits milder changes and gives a more modest result, with no stitches.

Some clinics use the name mini blepharoplasty for a smaller operation. At Mr Kumar's clinic, a mini-bleph means CO2 laser tightening.

03 Before you decide

You're likely to be a good candidate if:

- you have mild hooding or crepey skin on your upper or lower eyelids
- you would prefer to avoid surgery, or want to maintain the result of previous eyelid surgery
- you can take about a week away from work or social plans
- you have realistic expectations: the change is more modest than surgery

What the treatment won't do

- **It won't remove larger amounts of loose skin or fat.** These need an upper or lower blepharoplasty.
- **It won't treat eye bags caused by fat, or a drooping eyelid muscle (ptosis).**

Please tell Mr Kumar if you have, or have had

- you get cold sores
- any eye conditions, such as dry eyes, or previous eye or eyelid surgery
- you wear contact lenses
- you tan easily, have darker skin, or have had dark marks after injuries or previous treatments
- you have taken isotretinoin (Roaccutane) in the past year
- you take blood thinners, or medicines that make your skin sensitive to light
- you are pregnant or breastfeeding

04 Other options

You don't have to have treatment. Depending on your eyelids, the alternatives include:

- upper blepharoplasty, for moderate to marked hooding
- lower blepharoplasty, for eye bags and loose lower eyelid skin
- anti-wrinkle injections, for crow's feet and a subtle brow lift
- polynucleotides, for thin, crepey skin under the eyes

- doing nothing

05 What you can expect from the result

The skin looks smoother within a couple of weeks, and tightening builds over three to six months as new collagen forms. Most people see a fresher, more open look, although the change is more modest than surgery. The result can last several years, and a top-up treatment can maintain it.

06 Getting ready

Please:

- avoid tanning and sunbeds for four weeks before treatment, and use sun cream of factor 50 every day
- stop retinoid creams around the eyes about a week before treatment
- take the antiviral tablets you are given before treatment if you get cold sores
- come without eye make-up, and wear glasses rather than contact lenses on the day
- arrange a lift home if you would prefer not to drive with swollen eyelids

07 Anaesthetic and where it happens

Numbing cream is applied about 45 to 60 minutes before treatment. Treatment takes place in clinic, and you go home straight afterwards.

08 The procedure

Protective shields are placed over your eyes before the laser is used, and they stay in place throughout. Mr Kumar then passes the laser handpiece over the eyelid skin in sections. It feels hot and prickly, and a cooling fan helps. Treatment takes about 30 to 45 minutes.

09 Recovery

- **For the first two to three days,** the eyelids are swollen and red and feel sunburnt. Cool compresses and the ointment provided help, and sleeping with your head raised reduces the swelling.
- **From day four to seven,** the skin flakes and peels. Don't pick it, and avoid eye make-up until it has healed.
- **Most people are back at work** after about a week.
- **Pinkness fades** over two to six weeks. Use sun cream of factor 50 and sunglasses every day for at least three months.
- **Wait to wear contact lenses** until the swelling has settled.

10 Risks and complications

Most people recover without any serious problems. But like any treatment it carries risks, and you should understand them before you decide. Where reliable published figures exist, we've given an approximate, rounded figure. Where they don't, we've used these standard terms:

COMMON	UNCOMMON	RARE	VERY RARE
more than 1 in 100	1 in 100 to 1 in 1,000	1 in 1,000 to 1 in 10,000	fewer than 1 in 10,000

Your own risk may be higher or lower depending on your health, whether you smoke, and the details of your treatment. Mr Kumar will talk through what applies to you.

What almost everyone experiences

These aren't really complications. They're a normal part of healing.

- Swelling and redness of the eyelids for a few days.
- Flaking and peeling for about a week.
- Some pinkness for several weeks.

Other complications

- **Temporary darkening of the skin** COMMON
  Brown patches can appear a few weeks after treatment, more often in darker skin. They usually fade with creams and sun protection.
- **Prolonged redness** UNCOMMON
  Pinkness lasting longer than three months.
- **Infection** UNCOMMON
  Including a flare of cold sores. Antiviral tablets reduce this risk.
- **Milia** UNCOMMON
  Tiny white spots while the skin heals, which usually settle.
- **Dry or irritated eyes** UNCOMMON
  Usually short-lived, and helped by lubricating eye drops.
- **Lighter patches of skin** RARE
  Can appear months later and may be permanent.
- **Scarring or a change in eyelid shape** RARE
  Very rarely, the lower eyelid can be pulled down slightly.
- **Eye injury** VERY RARE
  Prevented by eye shields throughout treatment.

Complications of the anaesthetic

Numbing cream is very safe. Rarely it causes redness or an allergic reaction. Anaesthetic eye drops, if used, can sting briefly.

11 Further treatment

Many people are happy after one treatment, and some choose a second session a few months later for a stronger result. If you later need a bigger change, an upper or lower blepharoplasty is still possible. The cost of any further treatment isn't automatically included in your original fee; the clinic team can explain our policy.

12 Photographs and records

Photographs are taken before and after your treatment and kept in your medical records. They help Mr Kumar plan your treatment, record how things looked beforehand and follow your progress. This is standard good practice. If we ever want to use your photographs for teaching, publication or marketing, we will ask you separately and specifically, and saying no won't affect your care in any way.

13 Costs and insurance

A mini-bleph is a cosmetic treatment, so it isn't covered by health insurance. You'll receive a written quote first. Self-pay consultations cost £250 and follow-ups £150.

14 Your decision

This is your decision and you have the right to:

- take as long as you need to decide, and bring someone with you to appointments
- say no to treatment, or withdraw your consent at any stage, without having to explain why and without it affecting any other care you receive
- ask for a second opinion from another surgeon.

15 Your personal information

Your personal and medical information is kept securely and used in line with UK data protection law (the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018). It's only shared with the people directly involved in your care, or where the law requires it, unless you give your consent for anything else.

16 Who to contact, and when to get help urgently

If you have any questions or worries, please contact the clinic during opening hours on 020 3026 9695 or info@theuclinic.com.

Contact us promptly if you have

- signs of infection: increasing pain, spreading redness, yellow crusting or a temperature
- blisters or cold sores around the eyes
- any problem with your vision, or eye pain
- swelling that is getting worse after the first three days

Out of hours, your emergency contact number will be given by the treating hospital or clinic. In an emergency, call 999.

17 What happens next

Before your treatment, Mr Kumar will go through this information with you again and take your written consent. If anything in this booklet has raised a question, or if anything changes with your health or your medication before then, please let us know.

My questions

Note down anything you want to ask Mr Kumar and bring it to your next appointment.

Notes

Notes

Questions or worries?

Please contact the clinic during opening hours. Out of hours, your emergency contact number will be given by the treating hospital. In an emergency, call 999.

Telephone	020 3026 9695
Email	info@theuclinic.com
Sevenoaks	The Ü Clinic, 74 London Road, Sevenoaks TN13 2DN
Online	mrsivakumar.com

Mr Siva Kumar Veeramani is a Consultant Plastic, Reconstructive and Cosmetic Surgeon. GMC 6114710.