Asian eyelid refers to the characteristic absence of the upper eyelid crease in people of East Asian descent. This crease is known as the “supratarsal fold” and is almost universally present in Caucasian eyelids.

What is missing?

Anatomically, the absence of a supratarsal fold is due to a lack of connecting fibres that extend from the deeper muscle layer of the upper eyelid (called the levator aponeurosis) to the upper lid skin. Creating this connection is the basis of all methods for Asian eyelid surgery and can be broadly classified as the “closed” or “open” methods.

Closed (suture) method

- This procedure is generally performed under local anaesthetic.
- The position of the new upper lid fold is carefully planned and marked.
- Many closed suture methods are described over the years. Mr Lin uses a 3 point fixation method which is now commonly used in Korea and China.
- Three small punctures are made in the upper eyelid skin along this line and very fine stitches are passed through these spaces to create a connection between the upper eyelid muscle layer and the new skin fold.
- While this method is effective and relatively quick to perform, there is always a risk of the stitches failing and the fold “unraveling”. If this were to occur the procedure may need to be repeated.

Open (incision) method

- This procedure can also be performed under local anaesthetic.
- During the procedure, the new upper lid crease is carefully measured and marked, and the incision planned based on this level.
- This method allows for identification of all anatomical layers and usually two layers of stitches are placed, allowing for more secure fixation.
- This is the preferred method of Mr Lin, especially if there is existing asymmetry or previous surgery.
- It is used in most Asian centres in Korea, Japan and China.
- An epicanthoplasty can be performed in conjunction with this method to address the hooding of skin at the inner corner of the eye.

Recovery after the procedure

- There is usually some bruising and swelling of the eyelids for several days. This should improve by one week.
- Mr Lin will see you within one week for review and to remove the stitches.
- It is uncommon to have significant pain.

Scar management

- Scar management is an integral part of the recovery process following any surgery to help scars mature and fade.
- This is particularly relevant in Asian patients, who are more prone to keloid (thick) scar formation.
- As a part of our commitment to the highest quality surgery and after-care, we provide a specialist scar management consultation with our in-house dermal therapist, who will recommend a treatment regimen that is tailored to your individual needs.