

How To Improve Your Looks with Plastic Surgery

By Daniel Becker

Plastic surgery is a special type of surgery that involves both a person's appearance and his or her ability to function. Plastic surgeons strive to improve patients' appearance, self-image, and confidence through both reconstructive and cosmetic procedures.

Reconstructive procedures correct defects on the face or body. These include physical birth defects like cleft lips and palates and ear deformities, traumatic injuries like those from dog bites or burns, or the aftermath of disease treatments like rebuilding a woman's breast after surgery for breast cancer.

Cosmetic procedures alter a part of the body that the person is not satisfied with. Common cosmetic procedures include making the breasts larger (augmentation mammoplasty) or smaller (reduction mammoplasty), reshaping the nose (rhinoplasty), and removing pockets of fat from specific spots on the body (liposuction). Some cosmetic procedures aren't even surgical in the way that most people think of surgery - that is, cutting and stitching. For example, the use of special lasers to remove unwanted hair and injections or sanding skin to improve severe scarring are two examples of non-surgical treatments.

Below are various types of plastic surgery and a brief description of the results they can provide.

Facelift - Facelift is a surgical procedure that tightens and smoothes the skin of the face, neck, and jowls. Incisions are generally placed inconspicuously within the hairline and around the ears. Facelift can remove fat, tighten facial muscles, lessen wrinkles, and eliminate loose skin. Facelift is often combined with other procedures such as eyelid surgery or brow lift, in order to provide more complete facial rejuvenation

Upper Eyes - Upper eyelid surgery can remove the wrinkles, folds, and sagging skin that make a person look older and more tired than they feel. Incisions can generally be hidden along the lash line and natural creases of the eye. Eyelid surgery involves the removal of excess skin and fat and the tightening of upper eyelid muscles. The results are often very dramatic.

Lower Eyes - Dark circles, bags, and puffiness are the dreaded signs of stress and aging that often affect the lower eyelids. Fortunately, eyelid surgery can make a significant difference in how

your lower eyelids look. By removing pockets of fatty tissue, smoothing out wrinkling, and repositioning the skin and muscle in the lower eye area, can help you look younger, more refreshed, and more attractive!

Rhinoplasty - Rhinoplasty, or nose surgery, is used to improve the appearance of the nose and, if necessary, to improve breathing and correct defects. Rhinoplasty can make a nose bigger or smaller and can reshape the bridge, tip, nostrils, and angle between the mouth and nose. For people who feel self-conscious about the appearance of their noses, rhinoplasty can be a highly rewarding cosmetic surgery procedure

Chin - A weak chin can detract from a person's profile and even make a nose appear too prominent. Chin implants can help to augment a weak chin while bringing balance and harmony to a patient's face. The procedure is often combined with a facelift or rhinoplasty in order to achieve more dramatic results.

Cheek - High cheekbones have often been touted as a key to beauty. Well-defined and proportioned facial features can help a face look more balanced and attractive. Cheek implants can help add definition and improve overall facial appearance.

Brow Lift - One of the simplest and most effective types of cosmetic surgery, a brow lift (also sometimes called a forehead lift) removes wrinkles and sagging skin from the forehead. It can help raise drooping eyebrows as well. Brow lift can reduce furrows and lines that make a person look older, angry, or exhausted. It is often combined with facelift to provide overall facial rejuvenation.

Lip Lift - Even the lips suffer the effects of time, stress, and gravity. Some lips are naturally thin while others gather lines around them with time. A lip lift can restore a more youthful and attractive appearance to a patient's lips.

Chemical Peel - Smoother, younger-looking skin is concealed beneath the damaged outer layers. Chemical peels help remove the sun damaged, wrinkled, outer layer of skin to reveal the healthy layer below. Several different strengths are available to suit the various needs of patients. Chemical peel is one of the best ways to improve skin's texture and appearance.

Gynecomastia - Male breast reduction surgery can offer men with excess fat and tissue in the chest a better appearance and greater self-confidence. The procedure may sometimes be done

with liposuction alone or may also involve removing glandular tissue. In either case, the result is a firmer, flatter, more masculine chest.

Otoplasty - Otoplasty, or ear surgery, is a procedure that can improve the appearance of large or protruding ears. It can also be used to correct deformities. This type of surgery is most often performed on children between the ages of 6 and 15, but it can also be done for adults. For children or adults with large ears that stick out farther from the head than they would like, otoplasty can not only improve looks but can also improve self-esteem.

Thigh Lift - The thighs prove to be a problem area for many people. Despite a healthy diet and exercise plan, thighs may still sag and bulge with excess fat. In addition, after weight loss, extra skin may hang unattractively from the thighs. Thigh lift is a surgical operation that can remove fat and tighten lax thigh muscles. Thigh lift can be a very effective way to improve the appearance of the legs and overall silhouette.

Arm Lift - The upper arms are an area of concern for many people. Arm lift is a surgical procedure that can remove excess fat and loose skin from the upper arms, also tightening the muscles if necessary. This procedure can slim down arms, but it is also useful for people who have already lost a significant amount of weight and are bothered by excess loose skin.

Alloderm - Made from real, purified human tissue, Alloderm is an incredible product that can be used for a number of purposes, including lip augmentation. Because it contains collagen and other substances natural to the body, Alloderm looks and feels very realistic. Lip augmentation with Alloderm can help to plump up thin lips, creating a more attractive appearance.

Liposuction - Liposuction is used to remove fat from specific areas of the body (not for overall weight loss). It can help patients who are troubled by fat localized in areas such as the hips, thighs, buttocks, abdomen, arms, etc. Using a special tube, fat is siphoned away through small incisions, which can usually be hidden in the natural curves and creases of the body.

Abdomen - For some patients looking for a flatter, tighter abdomen, liposuction alone is not enough. Abdominoplasty (or "tummy tuck") not only removes fat but also tightens the underlying abdominal muscles and trims away loose skin. This procedure is often chosen by people who have lost a significant amount of weight or by women who have had multiple pregnancies.

Breast Augmentation - Having full, nicely shaped breasts can give a woman confidence and satisfaction with her appearance. Breast augmentation can help women with small or unevenly

sized breasts as well as women who have had to undergo a mastectomy (breast removal) for breast cancer. Using saline implants, this can help to create natural-looking breasts that add balance and beauty to your figure.

Breast Lift - With time, many women notice that their breasts begin to sag and lose volume. Breast lift is a surgical procedure that can help to move breasts back into a higher position (the nipple can be moved as well if need be). Implants can be used in conjunction with breast lift if women need to also increase the volume of their breasts. Breast lift helps restore a younger, more attractive silhouette.

Breast Reduction - For women who have large, heavy breasts, breast reduction can provide many benefits -- better appearance, less discomfort, easier exercise, and less self-consciousness. Breast reduction surgery removes fat, tissue, and skin from the breasts. The nipple is also repositioned. Sometimes covered by insurance (if it is used to relieve medical problems such as back pain), breast reduction has a high patient satisfaction rate.

Fat Injection - Fat injection involves collecting fat from one area of the body (the buttocks for example) and injecting into lines, scars, or other areas that need filling in. Fat injection is safe procedure; because the fat comes from your own body, there is virtually no chance for rejection. Fat injection is frequently used to fill in lines and wrinkles on the cheeks, forehead, and smile lines. It can also help make depressed scars less noticeable. Fat injection is not usually permanent, and patients may need maintenance treatments.

Botox - Facial lines and wrinkles can be effectively treated with Botox, one of the most popular cosmetic treatments available today. Botox works by forcing the muscles surrounding a wrinkle to relax. The skin can then smooth, making the wrinkle diminish or disappear. Botox is administered through a series of injections in the desired treatment area. It is most often used for wrinkles on the forehead, between the eyes, or around the mouth. Although the results are not permanent, Botox can provide you with smoother, younger-looking skin for three to four months per treatment. It can be repeated when the results fade.

Collagen - Collagen injections can be used to add fullness to the lips or to fill in wrinkles or scars. A skin test is required before treatment begins, because some people may exhibit an allergy to collagen injections. For good candidates, however, collagen injections can be a fast, easy way to look younger and better. Collagen injection is normally an outpatient procedure that requires little or no downtime.

Laser (Face) - Laser skin resurfacing can help restore health and beauty to your facial skin. A powerful laser light is used to remove the damaged outer layers of skin. The healthy layer beneath is revealed. Laser skin resurfacing can help with a host of facial skin problems, including wrinkling, uneven pigmentation, and scars. Laser skin resurfacing is usually an outpatient procedure. After a brief healing period, most patients report smoother, healthier looking skin.

Plastic surgery isn't something to rush into. If you're thinking about plastic surgery, find out as much as you can about the specific procedure you're considering and talk it over with doctors and your parents. Once you have the facts, you can decide whether the surgery is right for you.

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