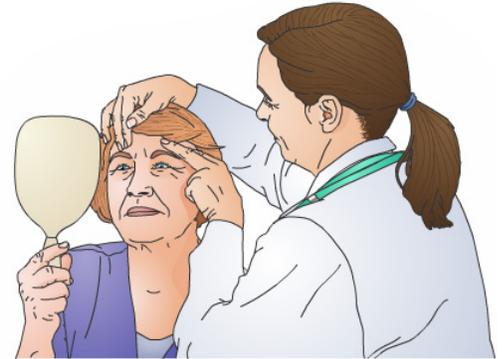


Introduction

Surgeons can reshape the appearance of body parts through cosmetic surgery. If you are not satisfied with your appearance, cosmetic surgery might help you look and feel better.

This reference summary explains plastic and cosmetic surgery. It discusses the benefits as well as the risks of plastic and cosmetic surgery. Information on the top five most commonly performed procedures is also included.



Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery

Cosmetic surgery changes your appearance by altering parts of your body. Before the operation, these body parts function normally but may not look the way you wish they did. The decision to have cosmetic surgery is reached by you and your cosmetic surgeon together. He or she can recommend if cosmetic surgery will be safe and effective for you.

You should have realistic expectations about what cosmetic surgery can do for you. You should also understand the possible risks and complications, as well as the cost of the surgery. Cosmetic surgery is not covered by most health insurance plans. The cost of the procedure and follow-up care varies depending on the procedure.



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The next five sections will talk about the most common cosmetic and plastic surgeries:

- Breast augmentation.
- Liposuction.
- Abdominoplasty.
- Eyelid surgery.
- Rhinoplasty.

Breast Augmentation

Breast augmentation surgery is a procedure that increases breast size. This is done with the use of breast implants. Breast augmentation surgery may be performed to create fuller breasts. It may also be done to reconstruct the breasts after breast cancer surgery or other conditions affecting the breasts.

In breast augmentation surgery, your surgeon may make incisions:

- At the edge of the colored skin around the nipple.
- In the crease under your breast.
- Under your arm.

Your surgeon will position the breast implant under your breast tissue or under the muscle beneath the breast. Some breast implants are filled with a sterile, saltwater solution called saline. Others are filled with elastic gel called silicone.

Your incision scars may fade over time. But they will never completely disappear.

While you are healing, it might help to wear a compression bandage or sports bra. These can provide extra support and help position the breast implants. Avoid strenuous activities for at least two weeks. Your breasts will be sensitive to physical contact or jarring movements while you are healing.



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Breast implants:

- May rupture.
- May complicate breastfeeding and the interpretation of mammograms.
- Will not prevent your breasts from sagging.

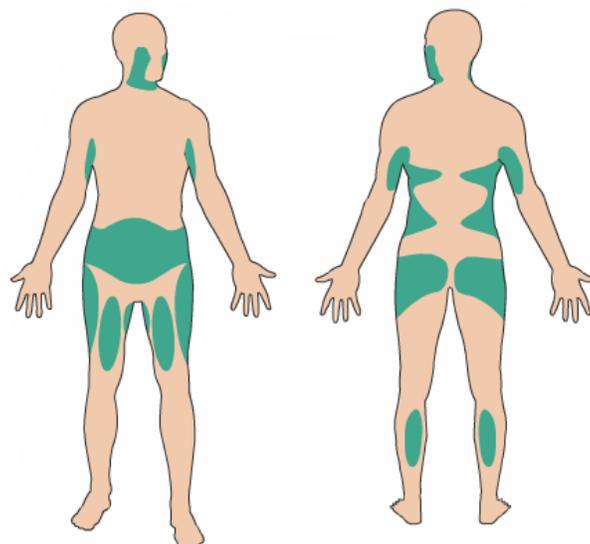
Your breasts will continue to age after augmentation. Weight gain or weight loss might change the way your breasts look.

Liposuction

Liposuction is a surgical procedure to remove fat deposits from under the skin in order to shape the body. Fat can be removed from under the skin using a vacuum-suction canula. The canula is a thin tube that is hollow inside. Fat can also be removed using an ultrasonic probe. An ultrasonic probe breaks up fat into small pieces. The pieces are removed via suction.

Liposuction may be done on the:

- Abdomen.
- Arms.
- Back.
- Buttocks.
- Calves.
- Face.
- Hips.
- Neck.
- Thighs.



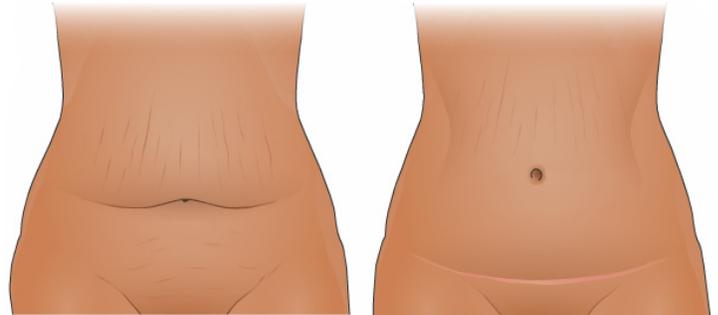
Your surgeon will evaluate the skin at the site where you are considering liposuction. He or she will determine if the skin is elastic enough to shrink after liposuction. If the skin is not elastic, it will be baggy after liposuction.

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After liposuction, the treated area may look wavy or bumpy. Cellulite, which is the pitting of the skin, may be made worse by the procedure. You will wear tight garments for a few weeks to keep your skin compressed after liposuction. Liposuction results may not be permanent. If the patient gains weight after the procedure, the fat may return to sites where the liposuction was performed.

Abdominoplasty

Abdominoplasty is also known as abdomen reduction, or a “tummy tuck.” It is a surgical procedure to remove loose, excess skin and fat. This is done to tighten and flatten the abdomen.



A flabby abdomen is due to:

- Excess skin.
- Fat.
- Poor elasticity of the skin.
- Stretching of the inner tissue and abdominal muscles.

A tummy tuck also can remove stretch marks and excess skin in the lower abdomen below the belly button. It can narrow the waist.

If you are planning to lose weight, you should do this before a tummy tuck. Significant weight loss after the procedure can result in even more excess skin.

During abdominoplasty, the skin and fat between the belly button and pubic hair are removed in a horizontal oval shape. The abdomen will be tightened with permanent sutures. A new belly button will be created through a small incision.

The incision from hip to hip above the pubic hair will be stitched together. This will leave a scar that falls along the natural crease within the bikini line. The length and visibility of the scar varies from person to person. You will wear a supportive garment, called an abdominal binder, for four to six weeks after surgery. This helps prevent fluid buildup and provides abdominal support during healing.

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Eyelid Surgery

Eyelid surgery repairs sagging or drooping eyelids. The surgery is also known as blepharoplasty, or an eyelid lift.

Sagging or drooping eyelids happen naturally as we age. Some people are born with droopy eyelids or they develop diseases that cause eyelid drooping. Severely sagging skin around your eyes can make you look older and tired. It can also impair your peripheral vision, or side vision. Removing excess tissue from one or both eyelids can improve your vision. It can also make your eyes appear younger and more alert.

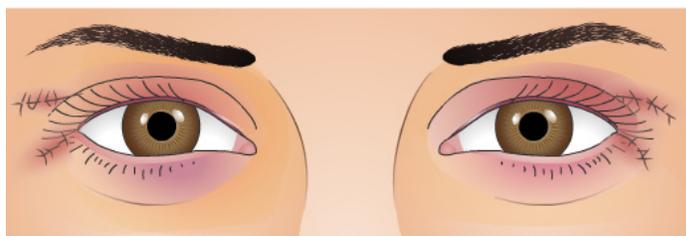


The surgeon usually will work on your upper lids first. He or she will make tiny cuts along the natural fold of the upper eyelid. Loose skin and some muscle and fat beneath the skin are removed.

Right after surgery, you may experience:

- Blurred or double vision.
- Tearing.
- Sensitivity to light.

Your incisions will be red and visible at first. Scars from the incisions may take six months or longer to fade. Swelling and bruising, similar to having "black eyes," will likely last a week or more.



Many people are happy with the results of eyelid surgery. For some people, results of eyelid surgery may last a lifetime. For others, eyelid drooping eventually may reoccur.

Rhinoplasty

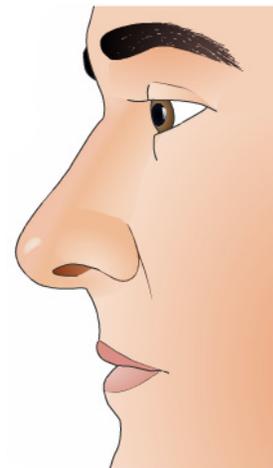
Rhinoplasty, sometimes called a "nose job," is a surgical procedure that is done to improve the appearance of the nose.

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Cosmetic rhinoplasty is used to:

- Adjust the angle between the nose and upper lip.
- Decrease or add to the size of the nose.
- Reshape the tip of the nose.
- Straighten the bridge of the nose.

Most people are able to return to their normal activities 7 weeks after rhinoplasty. If you are not happy with how the first rhinoplasty procedure went, you will have to wait at least a year for a follow-up surgery. The nose can change over the course of the year.



Risks and Complications

Risks and complications of plastic and cosmetic surgery depend on the type of surgery you are having.

Dissatisfaction with the results of your surgery is possible. All surgeries carry the risk of infection or a reaction to anesthesia.

Anesthesia is safe. Most healthy people do not have any problems with anesthesia. Some people have mild, temporary symptoms.

Risks of general anesthesia include:

- Chipped teeth.
- Cut lips.
- Headache.
- Nausea.
- Sore throat.
- Urine retention.
- Vomiting.



Complications of anesthesia are rare. They happen most frequently in older adults or people with serious medical problems.

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Complications include:

- Temporary mental confusion.
- Lung infections.
- Stroke.
- Heart attack.
- Death.

Blood clots in the legs can happen due to inactivity during and after the surgery. These usually show up a few days after surgery. They cause the leg to swell and hurt. Blood clots can become dislodged from the leg and go to the lungs. There, they will cause shortness of breath, chest pain and possibly death. Let your health care provider know right away if you experience symptoms of a blood clot. Sometimes, the shortness of breath can happen without warning. Getting out of bed shortly after surgery may help decrease the risk of blood clots.

Other possible risks of various cosmetic procedures include:

- Bleeding.
- Impaired function.
- Injury to muscles.
- Numbness or changes in sensation.
- Scarring.
- Soreness and swelling.

Talk to your health care provider about how these risks may apply to you.

After cosmetic surgery, you might need days, weeks or even months to recover. Your self-esteem might improve after cosmetic surgery. But cosmetic surgery is not likely to relieve depression or other mental health conditions.



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The five most common cosmetic and plastic surgeries are:

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- Rhinoplasty.

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