Facial Implants



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The Symbol of Excellence in Plastic Surgery®

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FACIAL APPEARANCE IS DETERMINED BY THREE BASIC COMPONENTS: SKIN, SOFT TISSUES, AND UNDERLYING FACIAL BONES. When the structure is disproportionate - the chin recessed, jaw undefined or cheeks flat - it significantly affects not only how others see us, but also how we see ourselves. Defined facial features, visible contours and natural angles that are proportionate, together create structural balance and a more attractive appearance.

If you are bothered by a small chin, weak jaw or lack of facial contour, plastic surgery with facial implants may benefit you. While any area of the facial structure can be augmented with implants, the cheek or malar area, chin and jaw are the most common sites for facial implants. In general, facial implants bring balance and better proportion to the structural appearance they define by increasing projection and creating more distinct features.

This brochure presents an overview of plastic surgery with facial implants. The best way to learn how facial implants can help you fulfill your personal goals is a consultation with a plastic surgeon certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®.

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What are facial implants?

Facial implants are specially formed solid materials compatible with human tissues, designed to enhance or augment the physical structure of the face. The precise type and size of implants best suited for you requires an evaluation of your goals, the features you wish to correct and your surgeon's judgment.

Plastic surgery with facial implants can produce a marked improvement in the underlying structure that forms facial appearance, improving proportion and balance. Although facial implants can improve the proportion, shape or size of virtually any region of the face, the more common sites for facial implants include the chin, jaw and cheek or malar region.

CHIN IMPLANTS can increase the size and projection of a small or recessed chin, one that in profile does not project in proportion with the forehead and mid-face. A small or recessed chin can also be described as one that seems to disappear into the neck of an individual of normal weight, rather than appearing as a distinct facial feature.

JAW IMPLANTS increase the width of the lower third of the face. Much like the chin, a weak jaw can be thought of as one that is not well defined and distinct from the neck, or one that slopes rather than angles from the ear to the chin. In some cases, both the chin and jaw can contribute to facial imbalance.

CHEEK IMPLANTS increase the projection of the malar regions. They add volume to areas which may be recessed or flat.

Plastic surgery with facial implants is best performed on adults or individuals whose head and skull have reached physical maturity, which generally occurs in late adolescence. Good candidates are:

- Healthy individuals who do not have a life-threatening illness or medical conditions that can impair healing
- Non-smokers
- Individuals with a positive outlook and specific goals in mind for improvement of facial contours

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Where do I begin?

A consultation with your plastic surgeon is the first step to learn how facial implants can improve the structural appearance of your face. A consultation is designed to fully educate you about plastic surgery with facial implants in a non-pressured environment, and will include:

- A discussion of your goals and an evaluation of your individual case
- The options available in plastic surgery with facial implants
- The prescribed course of treatment your plastic surgeon recommends
- The likely outcomes of plastic surgery with facial implants and potential risks associated with any prescribed procedure

Your plastic surgeon will also answer your questions.

Evaluation

Overall health and personal outlook can greatly impact the outcome of facial contouring with implants. These will be carefully evaluated in consultation with your plastic surgeon. The success of your procedure, safety and overall satisfaction require that you:

- Honestly share your expectations with your plastic surgeon
- Fully disclose health history, current medications, the use of vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- Commit to following all of your plastic surgeon's instructions precisely

Safety

By making the decision to consult with a plastic surgeon and following all the instructions given, you are taking an important step in helping to assure your safety.

Your plastic surgeon is certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®. This certification designates surgeons who are specifically trained in plastic surgery of the face and entire body.

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My facial implants

Your plastic surgeon will recommend the appropriate techniques to bring balance to your facial structure using facial implants.

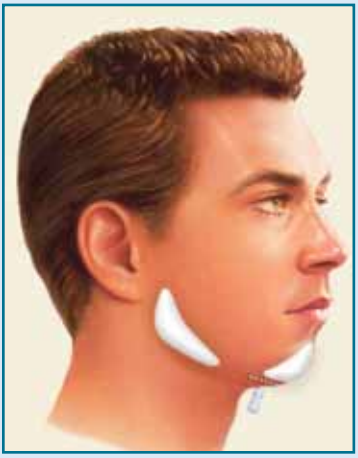
Facial implants are formed from solid, bio-compatible materials specifically designed for safe, long-term placement. The first consideration in plastic surgery with facial implants is implant selection: determining the necessary implant size and shape to safely achieve structural balance. Where only one facial feature is disproportionate, this feature alone may be augmented with implants.

If symmetry among facial features is part of your goal, remember that all of our faces are asymmetric to some degree. Results in any case may not be completely symmetric, although the goal is to create facial balance and correct proportion.

Facial implants may be desired or recommended to augment more than one facial region. The procedure may be performed alone, or as a complement to other facial contouring procedures such as nose or ear surgery. When facial implants are used in conjunction with a facelift to improve the signs of aging, the implant will likely augment the size of the cheek structure, creating a more pronounced mid-face than a facelift alone.

All facial implants are placed surgically, through incisions that create a supporting pocket beneath skin and soft tissues. Muscle and tissue surrounding the pocket hold the implant in place. Depending on the implant location, size and material from which the implant is formed, it may further be immobilized with sutures or surgical screws.

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Facial implants are positioned through a variety of techniques. For a chin implant, the incision may be inside your mouth, along the crease that joins your lower lip and gums. An incision just beneath the chin is an alternative. Jaw implants are generally placed through the mouth with incisions inside the mouth, further back along the jawline, at the crease where the inside of your cheek and gums meet.

The specific area to be augmented in the malar region determines where an implant will be positioned on the cheekbone. Cheek implants are most often placed through incisions in the mouth. When performed with other procedures, alternate incisions may be recommended including placement through an incision inside the lower eyelid or one within the hairline.





Plastic surgery with facial implants can provide permanent, almost immediate results to improve the appearance of facial structure by creating a more prominent chin, a better-defined jaw and a more pronounced mid-face with higher, better-contoured cheeks. By changing facial structure, a more proportionate balance among facial features is achieved, creating not only an improved appearance, but improved self-image as well.

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Preparing for surgery

Your plastic surgeon will carefully explain the facial implant procedure you will undergo. Prior to your procedure, you will be given specific instructions that may include:

- Pre-surgical considerations, diagnostic testing and medications
- Day of surgery instructions and medications
- Specific information related to the use of anesthesia

In addition, you will be asked to sign consent forms to assure your plastic surgeon that you fully understand the procedure you will undergo and any risks and potential complications.

Risks associated with surgically placed facial implants include infection, excessive scar tissue formation and firmness around the implant, shifting of implants, minor nerve injury and risks associated with anesthesia. These will be fully discussed prior to your consent.

It is important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon. It is natural to feel some anxiety. You may be excited about the outcomes of surgery and your improved appearance. You also may be nervous about surgery. These are normal feelings. Discuss them with your plastic surgeon.

What to expect

Plastic surgery with facial implants may be performed on an outpatient basis or in a hospital setting using local anesthesia that may include sedation, or general anesthesia. The decision for anesthesia will be based on the requirements of your specific procedure and considerations of patient and surgeon preference. Your plastic surgeon and the assisting staff will fully attend to your comfort and safety.

Following surgery

Once your procedure is complete, bandages or dressings may be applied to cover any incisions and to support the position of the implant during initial healing. Before being released following surgery, you or an accompanying family member, friend or caregiver will be given specific instructions that may include:

- How to care for the surgical site
- Medications to apply or take orally to aid healing and reduce the potential for infection
- Specific concerns to look for at the surgical site or in overall health

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Progress and healing

Initial healing may include swelling or numbness, and discomfort that can be controlled with medication. In addition, facial movements may be somewhat restricted or impaired. These are common conditions.

If your implants have been placed through intraoral incisions (those inside the mouth), you may be restricted to a soft or liquid diet to avoid moving your jaw during the initial phases of healing and for your comfort. It is essential that you rinse your mouth several times daily with an antiseptic solution even if you are able to brush your teeth.

In addition your plastic surgeon will provide specific postoperative instructions. Follow these instructions carefully; this is essential to the success of your outcome. A return to light, normal activity is possible as soon as you feel ready.

Initial wound closure may take 7 to 10 days, at which time any sutures will be removed, if necessary. Healing will continue for several weeks, as swelling dissipates and tissue surrounding the implant heals. Continue to follow your plastic surgeon's instructions and return for follow-up visits as scheduled.

Results and outlook

While the initial outcome of plastic surgery with facial implants is present almost immediately, it will be obscured by visible swelling. It may take several months for swelling to fully dissipate. As you adjust to your new facial features, realize that others are also adjusting to your new appearance. Don't be surprised at how others might react to your choice for plastic surgery. What is most important are your feelings of fulfillment.

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Your surgeon, your choice

Choosing to have cosmetic or reconstructive plastic surgery is an important decision; so is selecting a plastic surgeon. Consider these important guidelines.

BOARD CERTIFICATION – Not all physicians who perform plastic surgery or who use the title plastic surgeon are board-certified in plastic surgery.

The American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS) and The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada® certify physicians in plastic surgery of the face and entire body. To be certified by either board, a plastic surgeon must:

- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete a minimum of five years of surgical training following medical school, including an accredited plastic surgery residency program
- Pass comprehensive oral and written exams

PRIVILEGES – Your surgeon should have operating privileges at an accredited, local hospital for the same procedure you plan to have performed - even if that surgeon suggests your procedure be performed in an accredited office-based surgical facility or at an ambulatory surgery center.

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This educational brochure is designed to supplement a personal consultation with a plastic surgeon certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® or by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®. Plastic surgeons with this certification have completed extensive surgical training and rigorous examinations in plastic surgery; this uniquely qualifies them to perform cosmetic and reconstructive procedures of the face and entire body.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons® (ASPS®) and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) are dedicated to advancing quality care in plastic surgery by encouraging high standards in training, ethics, physician practice, research, and continuing medical education. ASPS and ASAPS members are certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS) in the United States and its territories or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®.

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AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS

444 East Algonquin Road
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005-4664
(847) 228-9900
www.plasticsurgery.org

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR
AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY, INC.

Communications Office
36 West 44th Street
Suite 630
New York, New York 10036
(212) 921-0500
www.surgery.org

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