

PLASTIC SURGERY

OF THE CHIN

Augmentation and Reduction

This brochure will familiarize you with some basic facts about chin augmentation and chin reduction surgery. It will give you enough general background to make you an "educated consumer" about plastic surgery of the chin. Your facial plastic surgeon will explain how this procedure applies to your particular condition.

COMMON PROBLEMS

Many people have a small chin- one that recedes or is not prominent enough. A small chin can make a person's nose appear more prominent than it really is, whereas a chin that is more in harmony with other facial features can draw attention away from the nose and give the entire profile a more pleasing balance. Building up a small chin also can improve dramatically the results of a facelift.

On the other hand, a chin may protrude excessively, either because of an abnormally large chin button" or because of a too-long jawbone.

SOME SOLUTIONS

Chin augmentation is an operation that changes a person's profile by bringing out the chin. It often is performed at the same time as nasal surgery.

Chin reduction surgery, which involves removing excess bone from the chin button, may provide an improvement when the chin protrudes excessively.

If the problem is not the chin itself, but rather excess skin that has collected under the chin, a facelift may be necessary rather than chin surgery.

In cases where the teeth do not fit together well or there is a severe underbite or overbite, consultation with an oral or maxillofacial surgeon may be necessary.

DECIDING ON AN OPERATION

Anyone interested in chin augmentation or chin reduction surgery should consult an experienced facial plastic surgeon. During the initial visit, the surgeon makes a thorough evaluation of the face and neck to determine whether surgery is indicated. He will then discuss any questions and concerns related to the surgery.

In addition to the skill of the surgeon, the patient's realistic expectations about the results of the surgery and his general emotional state are important considerations. Mental attitude is as important as the ability to heal in evaluating candidates for facial plastic surgery.

Once surgery is agreed upon, preoperative photographs are taken to help the surgeon plan the operation. These photographs usually are compared with similar ones taken sometime after surgery and serve as a permanent before-and-after record of the results.

HOW CHIN SURGERY IS DONE

A small incision is made either inside the mouth or just underneath and behind the most prominent part of the chin. A sterile surgical material that has practically the same consistency as the soft tissues of the chin is secured just in front of the jawbone to bring out the chin. The skin overlying the implant retains its smooth contour, and the implant itself becomes virtually undetectable after a short time. The chin augmentation is designed to make the new chin look as natural as possible.

This operation can be combined easily with the removal of fat and a small amount of skin from underneath the chin. This procedure, called a submental lipectomy, eliminates a double chin and can improve the overall effect of chin augmentation.

Chin reduction is accomplished by using an instrument much like a dental drill, through a small incision in the fold beneath the chin.

WHERE SURGERY IS PERFORMED

Chin augmentation and chin reduction surgery can be performed in a hospital, an ambulatory surgical care center, or an office surgery center, depending on the patient's and the physician's preference. It can be performed safely on an outpatient basis, but the doctor may recommend a short hospital stay.

KEEPING THE PATIENT COMFORTABLE

Preoperative medications to relieve tension and local anesthetics to numb the chin during surgery commonly are administered. These should keep the patient comfortable and free of pain. If desired, general anesthesia can be administered.

THE IMMEDIATE AFTER-EFFECTS

After the operation, some swelling and bruising can be expected. Most of the swelling usually subsides within the first week, the bruising within a couple of weeks. There may be some mild discomfort for a short time after surgery, but this usually is controlled easily with medication. Significant pain is uncommon.

THE RESULTS TO EXPECT

Significant improvement should be noticed immediately following surgery. The chin will look even more natural and attractive as the swelling subsides in the weeks after surgery. Just how much improvement is achieved depends on the individual's physical characteristics and the extent of surgery.

THE RISKS

There are inherent risks in any surgical procedure, and these should be discussed thoroughly with your facial plastic surgeon. Hundreds of successful chin augmentations are performed each year.

THE COSTS

Fees for facial plastic surgery and operative facilities vary widely and depend on the extent and complexity of the surgery as well as on the individual surgeon. Your facial plastic surgeon and his staff will discuss costs before the operation. Fees for cosmetic surgery generally are expected in advance of the surgery because this type of surgery usually is not covered by insurance. The best way to find out if a claim will be considered is to consult an insurance company representative in advance of the operation.

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The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS), is the world's largest association of facial plastic surgeons-those physicians performing cosmetic and reconstructive surgery of the face, head, and neck. The Academy's bylaws provide that AAFPRS fellows be board-certified surgeons with training and experience in facial plastic surgery and be fellows of the American College of Surgeons or the Royal college of Surgeons.

*Persons contemplating facial plastic surgery can receive information about such surgery and the name of AAFPRS fellows in their area who have chosen to participate in the Facial Plastic Surgery Information Service, Inc, by calling that service at 800-332-FACE (in the U.S.), 800-523-FACE (in Canada), 842-4500 (in Washington, D.C).
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