



THE PERFECT NOSE

NOSE JOBS - OTHERWISE KNOWN AS RHINOPLASTY - AREN'T JUST ABOUT appearances; it can also improve the function of one's nose in addition to changing its size or shape. Aside from repairing defects following an injury (either a birth defect or one caused by external factors, such as using an infected implant), rhinoplasty can also improve breathing through the nostrils, especially for individuals with persistent blocked noses, chronic sinusitis (infection of the sinuses) or sleeping disorders

Rhinoplasty is usually done inside the nose, with the surgeon readjusting the bone and cartilage underneath the skin. The surgeon usually makes the cuts inside the nostrils, but cuts are also sometimes made in the septum between the nostrils. The surgeon then separates the skin from the underlying bone or cartilage and mucous membranes, and follows a series of steps to cut, trim or augment (build up) the nasal bone or cartilage.

The surgeon can augment the nasal bone or cartilage in several ways, depending on how much needs to be added, the structure of the nose and available materials. For small changes, the surgeon may use cartilage harvested from deeper inside the nose or from the ear; for larger requirements, on the other hand, the surgeon can use cartilage grafted from the ribs.

The entire procedure usually takes five hours, after which you will be in a recovery room where surgical staff will monitor you for complications. You may either leave later that same day or, if the procedure is done in a hospital, be admitted overnight.

After the surgery, you will need to rest in bed with your head raised higher than your chest to reduce bleeding and swelling. Your nose may also be congested because of swelling or from the cotton packed inside your nose during surgery. Slight bleeding and drainage of mucus are common side effects for a few days after the procedure or after removing the dressing.

Some temporary swelling, black-and-blue discoloration of your eyelids and numbness can occur for two to three weeks after nasal surgery. Although rare, this may sometimes last up to six months, and subtle swelling may take a year to resolve entirely. Because of the slow healing process, you might not see the final results of your surgery for up to a year.

However, rest assured that very slight changes to the structure of the nose — often measured in millimeters — can make a large difference in how your nose looks. Most of the time, the surgeon can get results both of you are satisfied with. But in some cases, the slight changes aren't enough, and both you and the surgeon might opt for a second surgery for further refinements. In those cases, you must wait at least a year for the follow-up surgery because the nose can undergo changes during this time.

As with any major surgery, rhinoplasty carries risks such as bleeding, infection and an adverse reaction to the anaesthesia. Other possible risks specific to rhinoplasty include:

- Recurring nosebleeds
- Difficulty breathing through the nose
- Reduced sense of smell
- Numbness in and around the nose
- Possibility of an uneven-looking nose
- Scarring

Always talk to your surgeon to better understand the risks involved. With greater understanding, you will be better equipped to decide if this procedure is a good option for you. ■