

Nosing your way to new confidence

Enhancing the Oriental nose can help sharpen facial features and bolster self-assurance.

By Dr Leo Kah Woon, Plastic Surgeon

Rhinoplasty is a type of surgery employed to improve the functional and aesthetic outcomes of the nose, and is probably one of the most complex and fascinating forms of plastic surgery. It requires an intimate knowledge of nasal anatomy and an aesthetic eye to reconstruct a nose harmoniously with the rest of the face.

For Asians, aesthetic rhinoplasty is most commonly done to correct a bulky or flattened nose bridge, as the “ideal” nose has a high and thin nasal bridge with a sharp, refined tip. A higher nose bridge can be created using alloplastic materials such as silicone or goretex. But to convincingly reshape a bulbous or bulky nose, excess cartilage and skin has to be trimmed off the nasal tip, with the remnant cartilage adjusted and stitched up for a more elegant and refined look. The alar or “wings” of the nose can also be trimmed to narrow the nasal tip.

Rhinoplasty is often done simultaneously with genioplasty or chin surgery. This creates a balanced look where the nose is congruous with the facial features.

A medical necessity

However, rhinoplasty isn't only used for aesthetic purposes; it corrects conditions like a crooked nose which causes breathing difficulty, previous nasal trauma or a cleft nose. Such medical cases tend to be more complex and typically require an “open” rhinoplasty approach, where a small incision is made at the base of the nose for the surgeon to reconstruct nasal height and tip projection.

Additional tissue from the patient's own body may also be needed to provide structural support, and this is harvested from cartilage of the ear or ribs. In cases where the nasal bones are deviated, osteotomy or fracturing of the nasal bones is done, and the pieces repositioned into shape.

5 nosy tips

If you're thinking of getting your nose “done”, keep in mind the following:

1. Rhinoplasty is a complex procedure best done by an experienced rhinoplasty surgeon with a resume of proven results.
2. Establish a strong rapport with your surgeon. He/she should truly listen to and address your concerns before tailoring a treatment plan to your needs.
3. Expect six months to a year before the final result shows as the face takes a while to settle, even after the initial swelling subsides.



4. Harmony is the key word in facial aesthetics, so the nose should be congruous with your gender and ethnicity. A good surgeon will avoid “feminisation” of the man's nose or “westernisation” of an Asian nose.
5. Currently, composite rhinoplasty – where alloplastic material is combined with your own tissue for reconstruction – produces the most optimal result.

Fast Facts

- In 2013, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons listed rhinoplasty as the second most common cosmetic surgical procedure after breast augmentation, with over 220,000 done that year in North America alone.
- In Singapore, rhinoplasty is increasingly popular, with rising numbers of men and young adults having the procedure done.
- Young adults altering their noses typically start off with simple nasal augmentation using a filler injection first before progressing to full surgical rhinoplasty years down the road.
- Patients are typically in their 20s to 40s, and many of them have been unhappy with the appearance of their noses for some time. Most are in sales or customer oriented jobs, and believe that looking and feeling good will have a positive impact on their professional success.



Dr Leo Kah Woon
Dr Leo Aesthetic Plastic &
Reconstructive Surgery Pte Ltd
3 Mount Elizabeth
#06-10 Mount Elizabeth
Medical Centre
Singapore 228510
Tel: 6733 3895
www.drleoplasticsurgery.com