



THE NOSE JOB

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A rhinoplasty (better known as a nose job) is the procedure that re-shapes the nose. Noses that are out of proportion to the rest of a person's face can detract from an otherwise pleasing appearance. Sometimes a nose can appear too large, drooped, long or short, too wide, etc. Noses can be deformed or damaged. Some people are displeased with their profile view and want to avoid being seen or photographed from the side. Others may be concerned about their nose being too wide and try to camouflage the width with makeup or avoid smiling. In these cases, rhinoplasty has the potential to have a dramatic impact on a person's appearance and self esteem.



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Sometimes, unfortunately, friends or family may be insensitive to a person's need for improvement because they may not understand the potential psychological impact. However, I can tell you from personal experience that a rhinoplasty can make a big difference in a person's life. It also impacted my professional life. It was my own experience as a patient that initiated my interest in facial plastic surgery.

As an active young man and participant in high school and college sports, I suffered several nasal fractures. My nose was naturally a little large and over time and several fractures it began to look distorted. Surprisingly though, my quest for treatment lead me down a road of learning a great deal about the science of rhinoplasty. I underwent a first, then second surgery, and both turned out unsuccessful, resulting in additional deformities that were worse than before any treatment. Both doctors appeared to be well trained, "qualified" and well noted, but in hindsight, I now know they were not sufficiently experienced in rhinoplasty. I had discovered that not all surgeons who are "qualified" or trained in cosmetic cases are necessarily highly experienced with nose jobs.

Fortunately, I finally found a third doctor who specialized and limited his practice to rhinoplasty and facial aesthetic surgery. He solved my surgical issues and I soon realized that

rhinoplasty is one of the most difficult surgeries to master. It takes many surgical cases, lots of guidance and training, and years of experience to become an expert. Inspired, I decided to become an expert and this doctor advised me on a path to specialize in the face and nose.

Over my career I have treated thousands of patients whose lives have been changed through rhinoplasty. Each patient is unique, with specific characteristics and surgical challenges. So, I would advise anyone considering a rhinoplasty to see results, ask to see photographs, and perhaps talk to some patients. Review what kinds of surgery the doctor does. As the old adage says, "Jack of All, Master of None"...it is tough for most humans to be an expert at everything. It can be a mistake to assume the doctor is experienced with nose jobs because they have good results with another type of surgery.

It is also important to know that the results of a rhinoplasty are not only dependent upon the surgeon's talent, experience, and ability but also the degree of alteration needed, the healing capacity of the patient and the condition of the patient's tissues. Large changes in patients without adequate tissue structure might require additional procedures. On the other hand, simple changes might be more easily accomplished.

A patient's psychological status is also important. One should be emotionally mature and realistic in order to undergo any cosmetic alteration. A nose job is not going to change one's personality or solve all of life's problems. It won't land a job or attract a partner. However, if it improves one's self-confidence, it may help one feel less insecure. It can impact someone similar to having braces on one's teeth.

Lastly, it is important to understand that a rhinoplasty is not a commodity. It is not like selecting a new dress or shirt that is made on an assembly line, and not all doctors are highly experienced in nasal aesthetic surgery. Price shopping is risky in the nose job business. Therefore, if you or someone you love has a nasal deformity, educate yourself about whom you are selecting, go into the procedure with realistic expectations, and try to be sensitive to what that person is feeling. ■