

A new you

Renowned plastic surgeon **Dr Parag Sahasrabudhe**, informs about cosmetic surgical procedures

KRT

IN the modern era, one's appearance is an important facet of one's personality. Everyone desires to look young and fit, however not all of us may be blessed with the perfect appearance. Plastic surgery can be a boon for those who wish to change the way they look.

Plastic surgery has two distinctive branches — reconstructive surgery and cosmetic surgery. Reconstructive surgery is done to repair any deformity in the body, such as post traumatic accidental defects, burns, congenital defects in any part of the body, or even restorative surgery for post cancer patients. The goal here for a plastic surgeon is to restore normality. The goal in cosmetic surgery on the other hand is to surpass normality.

Cosmetic surgery is done to enhance a person's beauty. It isn't necessary that the patient has a deformity in the body that needs repair, normal appearance can be enhanced using the tools of cosmetic surgery.

There are complications involved in any kind of surgical procedure, so also for cosmetic surgery. It is important that those opting for such procedures must go for face-to-face consultations with a certified plastic surgeon. After a thorough examination, it can be ascertained what the patients' expectations are, what are the apt procedures required, and what precautions need to be taken both before and after going under the surgeon's knife. Safety is the most important criteria.

One of the main procedures are rhinoplasty, where the shape of the nose can be altered according to ones' preferences. The length or width of the nose can be increased or decreased; if the tip of the nose is bulky it can be repaired with surgery; so also flared nostrils can be made smaller. Surgery is done inside the nose, so there are no visible scars on the nose. Swelling subsides after about 8-12 weeks and patients must take adequate precautions to protect the nose from any injury or harm.

Liposuction is the second most popular procedure where localised fat deposits are removed from the body. Common locations for liposuction include abdomen, buttocks, hips, thighs, knees, calves, ankles, chin, cheeks, neck, and upper arms. About 10 per cent of body weight can be removed with liposuction. A pressure garment helps the skin contract evenly after the surgery. It takes a few weeks for the results to show. Liposuction is only a procedure used for body contouring, where excess fat depositions or localised fat deposits are removed and not to for instant weight loss. It only gives the initial impetus for weight reduction. Those who opt for liposuction must keep control over their



diet and exercise regularly to maintain the desired body shape.

Next is abdominoplasty, known as the tummy tuck. It helps remove fat and excess skin from the middle and lower abdomen, and tightens the abdominal wall. This procedure can dramatically reduce the appearance of a protruding abdomen and stomach. Abdominoplasty addresses much more than liposuction. During abdominoplasty, the umbilicals are relocated or reconstructed and even the bellybutton is relocated. It is meant only for body sculpture, not for weight loss. Abdominoplasty is best for those who are in relatively good shape but are bothered by a large fat deposit and/or loose abdominal skin that does not respond to diet or exercise. It is particularly helpful to women who, because of multiple pregnancies, have abdominal muscles and skin that do not return to the normal shape even with exercise.

Breast implants are the next important procedure in cosmetic surgery. There are surgical procedures for mammoplasty — breast reduction,

mastopexy — upliftment or tightening of sagging breast tissues, and breast enlargement with implants. Breast cancer patients, who have had one or both breast removed, can opt for a procedure where the breasts are reconstructed with implants of one's own body tissues. Silicon breast implants are extremely popular. It's a myth that silicon implants cause breast cancer. The surgery is short. The patient is discharged very soon.

The next range of procedures is used for the sculpture of the face. These include rhytidectomy more popularly known as a facelift; otoplasty or surgery to alter the shape of the ears, blepharoplasty or eyelid surgery to correct droopy eyelids or puffiness of the eyes; chemical peels or dermabrasion used for anti-wrinkle treatment and to attain blemish-free skin.

Do not be hasty and thoroughly consult with one's doctor and know about the side-effects the surgery might entail. Most importantly, be realistic about the expected changes.

— AS TOLD TO IPSITA DAS