



One woman came to me with 19 profile shots of Deepika Padukone's nose insisting that is what she wanted, it was frightening.

DR MOHAN THOMAS

Senior consultant, Breach Candy Hospital, Mumbai

he talks about women, young and old alike, coming with similar requests, that you take notice. "I have people walking in with all kinds of requests through this door," says Thomas. "And always the driving factor is Bollywood. There does not seem to be any amount of individuality here.... In fact, the first question some patients have asked me is who are the celebrities I have worked upon."

But if everyone wants to look like everyone else, are we not going to have a world of clones? Not really, says Dr Anup Dhir, since no two noses or chins can ever look the same. "You can want a particular type, but the way it sits on your face will be drastically different from the way it appears on the face of who you admire," he says.

In India, according to Professor Kanika Khandelwal, who teaches sociology at Shri

Lady Sri Ram College, Delhi, the obsession with being fair is slowly being replaced with the obsession of being thin, but with the vital stats still in place. Both Thomas and Dhir corroborate this. The latter mentions how breast implants are fast gaining acceptance and new heights of popularity while Thomas talks about the difficulty of explaining to a patient with a large frame why she can never be size zero. "I have had requests for hip bone reduction from perfectly healthy, normal-sized women as they feel thin and petite is the only accepted notion of beauty," says Thomas.

Ask the fembots whether they are pedalling a fake notion of beauty and angry sputters are directed at you. "Everyone has to conform to what appeals.... Why should I take a stand and lose out on whatever job opportunities and mileage I might be getting?" says an actor whose last role was in 2007 and even then her liaisons made more news.

The definition of what is attractive has been narrowed down to thin and artificially enhanced and it is only awareness with which we can fight it, says Khandelwal. Switching off the television is an option, but an extreme one. "The only way to fight is to be aware. As parents, don't be critical of your body in front of children, encourage them to value themselves as individuals rather than bodies," she says.

Not that the girls don't realise there is more to life than just this. "I have a great career and a very good man as my boyfriend, but I do feel the need for an enhanced bust line," says Ruhi Jain, a 29-year-old market analyst. "I want to look good when I wear certain cuts and styles," is her simple explanation since looking good is directly linked to feeling good.

"These days no one can underestimate the importance of being fit. Regular grooming is vital," says Chopra, when asked if the glamour world puts undue pressure on women to conform. But how attractive do men find this whole fit and firm race? Abhishek Dogra, a 29-year-old radio producer, says the fascination comes from the flaunting of sexuality. "The arousal comes from their declaration of their liberation in this manner. It does not matter whether they are attractive or not. More than the 38D, it is the fact that the woman is talking about her 38D which makes her attractive," he guffaws. But he is still trying to convince his girlfriend to go for the poker straight hair look. "It's just very smooth," he says sheepishly.

Fembots have always been around, but it is only now that they are getting noticed. Shunned into B-grade roles and cabaret dances in the eighties and nineties, they are the front-runners in today's reality show revolution. But even as they go from strength to strength, some of them better watch out. We don't think *Playboy* is going to be very amused by the repeated misuse of its name as a way of getting noticed. ■

Look at me: Rakhi Sawant's confession of her doctored assets won her appeal

