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PARTNERS SPEAK OUT

FEMINA READER SERVICE



Dr Mohan Thomas, M.D. (USA) FACS (USA), leading Cosmetic Surgeon, Visiting Scholar-Mt Sinai Hospital (New York) and Consultant, Breach Candy Hospital, The Cosmetic Surgery Institute, Mumbai

Q As I have a small nose, a plastic surgeon has advised me to insert an implant. I'm a little wary about doing this. Will there be any problems down the line? Are there any substitutes to an implant?

TANUJA REDDY, VIA E-MAIL

A Implants are very widely used to build the height of the nose. Although your own tissue (bone, cartilage) could be used for this purpose, most people seeking cosmetic rhinoplasty prefer an implant. This could be because of the good safety record of the implants and the reluctance to let bone or cartilage be harvested from another area.

There are potential problems with implants — edges could become visible through the skin, the implant can shift or be rejected, and there is

a chance of infection. Fortunately these problems are infrequent when the surgical technique is meticulous.

Solid silicon implants are widely used in rhinoplasty and the results are good. Among autologous tissues, a bone graft from the skull and cartilage from the ribs yield the best long-term results.

Q I'm 24 years old and plan to get breast implants inserted. However, I'm confused as to what type I should choose. Research on the Internet revealed that there are many different types of implants available — saline, silicon, round and anatomic. What do you recommend?

JENNY FRANCIS, VIA E-MAIL

A The cohesive gel implants available now have been approved by the US Food and Drug Administration. Their safety record is high and they feel very natural. In this scenario it is unlikely that saline implants will be the preferred option. Both anatomic and round implants are good. Indian women prefer round implants, as they give the upper pole fullness desired by them. A "good cleavage" is demanded by most patients undergoing breast implants and this is possible with round implants.

Western women prefer anatomic implants as they tend to appreciate the natural slope of these implants. Also, anatomic implants are significantly more expensive, which is a big consideration for most patients.

Q I am a regular reader of your column and appreciate your frank advice. I'm 35 years old and have lost 50 kg in the last two years through stomach banding. I had a tummy tuck done six months ago to take care of the loose skin in the front. My buttocks are totally flat and droopy now. Would you recommend a butt lift and an implant to correct this?

VIJAYA NAIR, TRIVANDRUM

A Posterior body lift is very often required by people who have undergone massive weight loss. A butt lift along with gluteal implants is a good option to address the volume loss and excess skin. A recent technical modification makes use of the excess skin, which gets rotated into the buttocks to augment that area. Using this technique, adequate volume correction can be obtained without the use of implants. Of course, the ultimate decision on the surgical options will also depend on your expectations and the findings of the clinical examination.

Q I'm 22 years old with sunken cheeks, which gives my face an unhealthy look. I have tried gaining weight to get rid of this problem, but the fat is only going to my hips and thighs. I don't want chubby cheeks, but can I be made to look normal at least?

SHRAVANI MISHRA,
GURGAON

A Sunken cheeks are fashionable these days. The quest for a sculpted face has resulted in many people getting their cheek fat removed and facial liposuction done. However, as you have rightfully pointed out, too lean a face can give an under-nourished look.

The tissue volume on the cheeks can be increased by temporary fillers or permanently by fat transfer. Sculptra™ is a filler which will last for about two years.

Fat grafting is probably the best option, considering that the results are permanent and your own fat is used. Even though this is a surgical procedure, the access points are tiny and in hidden locations. Technical refinements in fat grafting over the past decade have now made it a very reliable procedure with stable results. It is usually done as a day-care surgery without admission to a hospital.