



nose

rhinoplasty in the younger patient

Younger people seeking rhinoplasty often ask for particular improvements. Sydney plastic surgeon **Dr Warwick Nettle** explains how two key elements can help achieve the desired results. Jessica Rule reports.

Young patients form a significant group in the demand for rhinoplasties, according to Sydney plastic surgeon Dr Warwick Nettle. 'The two major issues to address are form and function – specifically shape and breathing – in nasal surgery,' he says.

Dr Nettle explains that the entire face is taken into consideration rather than just the nose. 'We have to look at the nose in relation to the whole face and the other features, and the bony prominence of the cheek and chin.'

Form

Producing harmony in the interaction between the tip and the bridge of the nose makes the features more pleasing to the eye. 'There are many patterns and numeric formulas that can help achieve this balance,' says Dr Nettle. 'For example, the Golden Ratio can guide the measurements. The optimum height from the base of the glabella down the bridge to nasal tip should have a ratio of 1.618 to one. The projection of the nose from the face to the tip should have this same ratio, and the upturn angle of the nose is ideally 105 percent for women and 95 percent for men.'

Although Dr Nettle says the numbers are a good guide for surgeons, their artistic sense, technical ability and experience is what will ultimately produce good results.

He says his younger patients are predominantly female, although there are many males who have sustained trauma to their noses from playing contact sports and present with squashed or crooked noses as well as breathing difficulties.

Dr Nettle says that in his experience young women elect to have surgery to their noses mainly for cosmetic reasons.

'They want to refine or improve the look of their nose,' he explains. 'The two areas they most want corrected are the hump, or bridge, and the tip. However, in this day and age, people are steering clear of the scooped ski-jump nose and opting for a more straight bridge.'

'Generally, Caucasian patients want the bridge lowered so it is not so prominent. The main complaints in relation to the nasal tip are that it is either a bulbous amorphous tip (large and shapeless) or a droopy tip that points down,' he continues.

Dr Nettle says many of the young women suffering from a droopy nose tip find it quite distressing. 'It tends to bend down when they smile because the muscles pull the side wall of the nose up and the tip down,' he explains. 'This can be corrected by providing structural support for the tip using cartilage taken from the patient's nose.'

Function

A key to successful rhinoplasty is the functional performance of the new nose as well as its shape and aesthetic. 'Around ninety percent of people presenting for rhinoplasty suffer from breathing difficulties of varying degrees,' Dr Nettle explains. 'Large numbers have trauma from past injuries, while others may have broken nasal passages from birth.'

To ensure breathing difficulties are treated, Dr Nettle says the nasal passages should be left as clear as possible.

Age

The nose continues to form up to the age of around 17 to 18, so Dr Nettle recommends surgery should not be performed



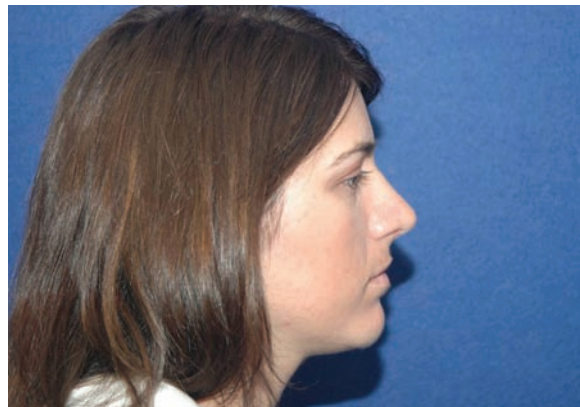
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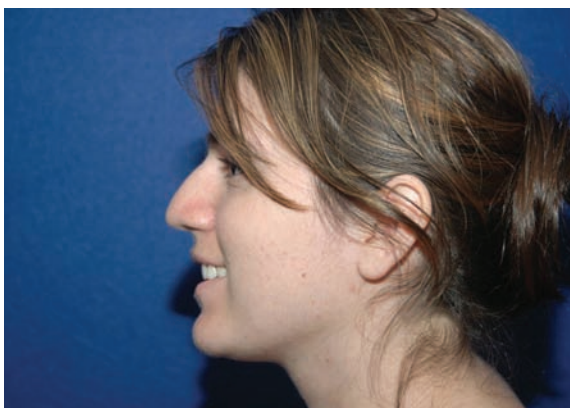
AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Nettle



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Nettle



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Nettle

before this time. 'Very young people often change their minds as they grow older and people can "grow into" their noses, as their faces are still changing,' he says. 'Eighteen to 21-year-olds are more mature, confident and understand a lot more about themselves. They're better equipped to make those sorts of decisions.' Dr Nettle also encourages parents to be involved, adding that consensus and support from their families is strongly recommended.

A rhinoplasty procedure typically involves a day's stay in hospital, with the procedure itself lasting between around one-and-a-half to two hours, depending on the individual

case. 'Patients can expect to wear a thermo-plastic nasal splint for five to six days after the procedure,' he says. 'We inject a local anaesthetic into the nose prior to operating and the majority of patients report minimal pain in the first 24 hours following the procedure.'

Digital imaging systems that project an estimate of a patient's post-procedure appearance have played a big part in rhinoplasty becoming a procedure with a high patient satisfaction rate, according to Dr Nettle. 'It's an excellent tool for doctor-patient communication, so we can share thoughts and make sure we're on the same page.' **acsm**