



nose

by a
nose

A successful rhinoplasty procedure is one that combines artistry and surgical science, says Sydney ENT and facial plastic surgeon **Dr William Mooney**. Lauren Alexander reports.



The decision to undergo a rhinoplasty procedure is not one that should be taken lightly, says Sydney ENT and facial plastic surgeon Dr William Mooney. 'Your face is something you've grown up with your whole life, so making an alteration to it can have a major impact on your life,' he says.

The nose serves as the focal point of the face and is also a complex organ involved in respiration, sinus function, smell and taste.

When assessing a patient presenting for rhinoplasty surgery, Dr Mooney first looks at the structure, size and shape of the nose, as well as any problems such as bumps, depressions and deviations.

'The nose also has to harmonise with the other facial features, the cultural background and sex of the patient – even their age and personality,' he says. 'For example, a female with very distinct features often needs a more definite nasal profile, and similarly a more feminine nose looks wrong on a strong male face.'

'A successful rhinoplasty is one that creates a natural-looking, "unoperated on" appearance; a nose that balances and complements the other aspects of the face.'

Careful discussion of the patient's expectations and concerns is also key to optimal results. 'Every rhinoplasty procedure is unique. While one patient may place greater importance on facial aesthetics, others may be more concerned about nasal functional,' says Dr Mooney. 'When it comes to a successful rhinoplasty, good communication between the patient and surgeon is a more powerful and important tool than the scalpel.'

Dr Mooney meets with patients several times before the actual surgery to make a full assessment and discuss realistic outcomes. 'I believe the more time taken to assess the patient and discuss the procedure with them, the more satisfied they usually are with the final outcome,' he says.

As well as the discussion about the shape of the nose, Dr Mooney says computer imaging is a beneficial tool in looking at different shapes of the nose and how they would complement the patient's overall facial dynamics.

'Using digital imaging, together the patient and surgeon can view the nose from several angles and look at the effects of different changes,' he says. 'This gives the patient a good idea of how the final result will look. It also illustrates the effect even just one millimetre of change can make.'

Rhinoplasty techniques are continually evolving, allowing the surgeon to provide shape and definition to the nose than has been possible in the past. Problems such as flared or collapsed nostrils can be successfully treated, while modern implants can be used to replace nasal cartilage, achieving a better result and improved patient recovery. Injectable rhinoplasty techniques can also be used for minor deformities and depressions, avoiding the need for surgery altogether.

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Functional problems can also be addressed, such as snoring, sinusitis, allergic rhinitis and diminished olfactory function. 'Some patients presenting for cosmetic reasons are not aware of the functional abnormalities of their nose and are pleasantly surprised by the improvement in nasal function post-surgery,' says Dr Mooney.

'The ideal nose is not a myth, but it is not a cookie-cutter nose that you find on a model or celebrity in a magazine. It is the right nose for the individual patient's face, age and personality,' he concludes. **acsm**

Case study 1

This 33-year-old mother of three had been concerned about her nose for some time. She had functional obstruction which was worse at night and during winter. This was due to a deviated septum and resulted in her breathing through her mouth at night and suffering from a very dry mouth. Cosmetically she didn't like the shape of her nose, in particular the hump. At two months after a septo-rhinoplasty her cosmetic and functional problems have been corrected and she is very happy with the results.



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Mooney

Case study 2

Functionally, this 27-year-old patient had nasal obstruction which resulted in fractured sleep and made even simple tasks such as eating and exercising difficult. Cosmetically she was concerned about the dorsal hump and overall size of her nose, feeling that it didn't really suit her face. The post-operative photo was taken at six months and this patient has a significantly improved nasal airway and a pleasing new nasal contour which gives more balance and harmony to her overall face.



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Mooney