



nose

computer imaging for noses

Sydney facial plastic surgeon **Dr William Mooney** uses computer imaging to help patients visualise rhinoplasty results.

For some people, the desire to improve the appearance of their nose stems from dissatisfaction with its original look. For others, it may be a desire to regain the nose they once had prior to an injury, as well as improve its functionality.

Having nasal surgery is a big decision. Some patients have very specific ideas about what physical changes they desire to improve their appearance. Others aren't sure what changes they need, but recognise the proportions aren't quite what they want and need the help of a surgeon to suggest some changes.

Most patients ask if they can choose the outcome of the surgery, and the good news is that this is possible – within reason, according to Sydney facial plastic surgeon Dr William Mooney.

'However, patients need to be aware that it is not like going to the grocer and choosing a nose off the shelf to your liking,' Dr Mooney explains. 'It is important that patients clearly discuss with their surgeon the aspects of their nose they want improved. I spend much time and sometimes take several consultations to make sure that the patient has clearly communicated the desired outcome.'

Computer imaging is one of the key tools plastic and cosmetic surgeons use to communicate the patient's desires and view what the final result will be.

'Computer-enhanced video imaging acts as a discussion tool to find the common ground between patient expectations and surgical possibility,' Dr Mooney says. 'I personally feel that it is a very valuable tool in conveying your aesthetic desires with your surgeon. While not every surgeon will agree, based upon the fact that pixels are easier to manipulate than tissue, or that a patient could feel their imaging is a guarantee, the bottom line is

that it works as a communication tool.

'You could have the best surgeon in the world, the best healing experience ever documented and a seamless surgery. However, if you and your surgeon are not on the same page about what looks good, won't be satisfied with the result.'

Computer digital imaging is particularly useful when deciding how narrow or wide to make the patient's nasal tip, how much the tip should be rotated or how much nasal hump reduction is appropriate.

'Using digital images taken with a digital camera, you can often view different changes to the nose on the same day as your consultation,' Dr Mooney says. 'For example, a patient who has a large nasal hump may want reduction, but do they want a straight dorsum or would they prefer to have a slight concavity? Using the computer imaging, I can discuss these goals with the patient looking at the nasal profile together on the computer screen.'

Dr Mooney also warns that patients need to have realistic expectations when it comes to nasal surgery. 'Many factors determine your outcome, including skin thickness, underlying cartilage positions and the dimensions of your face,' he says. 'Additionally, goals of cosmetic nasal surgery have changed over the years. Our aim now is to maintain a natural look that draws attention to and accents the best features of your face.'

Aside from patients who want to alter the original proportions of their nose, nasal surgery is also common with patients who have suffered a broken nose. Because of the nose's leading position and the delicacy of its bones, it contains the most frequently injured bones on the face. This often leads to progressive nasal deviations and breathing difficulties.

'Following surgery, many patients are delighted to be able to breathe through their nose again, not realising the magnitude of difficulty they had nasal breathing prior to their procedure,' Dr Mooney says.

A rhinoplasty may often be accompanied by a chin augmentation procedure, which can enhance the final outcome, Dr Mooney says. 'If the chin is small or slightly weak, it can make the nose and cheeks seem large,' he says. 'By augmenting the chin with a chin implant, the

results of a rhinoplasty may be advanced.'

The most positive outcome that patients can expect from a rhinoplasty is a natural-looking appearance that enhances the appearance but doesn't obviously indicate facial surgery.

'The most common scenario is that you will still look yourself but with a nose that is in better balance and blends harmoniously with the rest of your face,' Dr Mooney says. **acsm**

case 1

This 19-year-old patient had concerns about the appearance and function of her nose. She had significant obstruction and allergic rhinitis (hayfever/allergy of the nose). Her concerns were also about the shape of her nose: she had a large hump and the nose was also over-projected, twisted and deviated. Examination with a flexible fibre-optic telescope confirmed she had a significantly deviated septum (partition between the nostrils). Postoperative review is early at three weeks, but already this is an excellent result. She still has a little swelling over the tip but this will resolve. This patient also had an incidental hoarse voice due to vocal fold nodules that were successfully surgically treated at the same time as her nose.



BEFORE



COMPUTER IMAGE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Mooney

case 2

This 23-year-old woman presented with both functional and cosmetic concerns. She suffered nasal allergy, nearly constant nasal obstruction and recurrent sinusitis. A CT scan showed significant sinus disease. She also had a problem with snoring. Her cosmetic concerns were that her nose was too broad, too large and that she had a hump. The postoperative photos were taken at two months. As such we expect to see subtle further refinement of the shape of her nose. She is, however, delighted not only with the new shape, but with her great airway, lack of headaches and post-nasal drip, and she no longer snores



BEFORE



COMPUTER IMAGE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Mooney