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## An A to Z of Cosmetic Surgery



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Dr. Trevor Born treats Jannine Wilneff with a Botox injection above her eyebrows to decrease frown lines. Ms. Wilneff receives the injection several times a year.

**F**rom thinning hair to thick ankles, love handles to liver spots, today's cosmetic surgeons offer a host of treatments to enhance the appearance. With a range of newer, less invasive (and often less expensive) treatments, men and women can now minimize wrinkles and look rejuvenated without going under the knife.

At the same time, surgical procedures like facelifts, liposuction, and rhinoplasties remain popular. With advances in surgical techniques, anaesthesia and more refined tools, cosmetic procedures continue to improve and become safer for the patient. Still, practitioners warn, no patient should take any kind of surgery lightly. Every cosmetic procedure poses risks to patients, from minor bruising and swelling to scarring and allergic reactions, and in extreme cases death. Patients should discuss the possible risks of any procedure with their surgeons and proceed with due caution.

Listed below are descriptions and costs for some of the most common cosmetic procedures. While prices will vary from surgeon to surgeon, the fees listed include surgeon's fees plus aesthetic, nursing and facility fees, and GST.

### THE INJECTABLES

The biggest development in cosmetic surgery isn't surgical at all. A new generation of "injectable" products minimizes or eliminates wrinkles and lines, makes lips fuller, and fills acne scars at a fraction of the cost of more invasive – and painful – surgical procedures.

Botox works by paralyzing underlying facial muscles, preventing the contractions that cause wrinkles. It works especially well around the eyes, where wrinkles at the outer corners, known as crow's feet, develop and in the "frown lines" between the brows that can make people look tired or angry. The effect wears off after four to six months, and staying frown-free will cost around \$500 per treatment.

Once Botox has temporarily paralysed a wrinkle, a new generation of temporary, semi-permanent, and permanent "fillers" can be injected to smooth it out. Products like Restalyne and its offshoots – Restalyne Fine Lines and Perlane – are non-animal sources of hyaluronic acid, a substance that occurs naturally in the skin. Injected into the face and lips, these products plump up the skin under the wrinkles, filling it in for between three and six months. Treatment costs about \$500.

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For a potentially longer-lasting effect, a patient's own body fat – from a knee or thigh – can be injected into fine wrinkles and lines and under the eyes, where it can last up to 18 months. Micro-fat injections cost approximately \$2,500 for a session.

If you are looking to fill those folds permanently, a shot or two of Artecoll should do the trick. Microscopic Plexiglas beads mixed in a collagen base are injected into the wrinkle. As the injected collagen dissolves, the body's own collagen gradually engulfs the beads, forming scar tissue that fills wrinkles in the face or lips. While the effect is permanent, it may take a few months to appear fully, and up to two or three treatments at around \$1,200 each may be required.

Botox can also be injected into the underarm sweat glands, as well as the hands and feet, to stop heavy perspiration. The drug, says Dr. Trevor Born of Toronto's Institute of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, paralyzes the gland and the muscles that induce it to produce sweat. The entire underarm process takes approximately 10 minutes per side, kicks in after five or six days, and lasts for months.

"It's caught on in Hollywood," says Dr. Born, "where stars at the Oscars look at their \$30,000 designer gowns and decide that they don't want to risk ruining them with perspiration."

Botox injections for armpits run about \$750; hands start at \$800.

## FACELIFTS, BROW LIFTS, EYELID SURGERY

Time and gravity can take their toll on the face: as we age, skin loses elasticity, muscles sag and eyes can become puffy. Patients can turn back the hands of time, however, with the help of a range of facial cosmetic surgeries.

A facelift targets the lower face and the neck. A surgeon makes incisions, which are hidden in the hairline and behind the ears. Then the skin is lifted, the underlying muscles and connective tissues in the face and neck tightened and the skin redraped. Excess skin causing unsightly jowls and folds is removed, and the doctor may use liposuction to get rid of small amounts of excess fat.

For those concerned about drooping eyes and furrowed brows, a forehead lift elevates the brows to minimize deep wrinkles and restore that youthful, wide-eyed look. Frowning causes the vertical lines between the eyebrows; it causes the eyebrows to lower, making the eyes appear smaller, notes Dr. David A.F. Ellis, a professor at the University of Toronto. With endoscopic forehead lifting, the eyebrows are placed exactly where the patient prefers without giving a surprised look. Dr. Ellis says this is possible with the use of a special surgical glue which fixes the eyebrows in the exact position the patient wants them.

The surgery involves four tiny incisions in the scalp, no hardware to support the forehead lift, minimum post-operative bruising and makes the eyes look brighter and bigger. The softened frown lines gives the forehead a less angry appearance.

To rejuvenate the skin around the eyes, upper and lower eyelid surgery (blepharoplasty) may be in order. For the upper lids, the surgeon makes incisions in the eyelid's natural folds to remove excess fat, muscle and loose skin. For the lower lids, incisions are made behind the eyelid to remove excess fat that causes bags under the eyes. Extra skin is removed with an incision along the lash line.

For face and brow lifts, expect to be out of the public eye for up to two weeks while initial healing takes place. Toronto-based facial plastic surgeon Dr. Peter Adamson says that 70% to 75% of the healing occurs over the six weeks following surgery, and that the final effects of the procedures may take up to a year to emerge. The cost is \$8,000 and up for a facelift, \$4,000 and up to lift the brow and about \$5,000 for upper and lower eyelid surgery.

## RHINOPLASTY

Rhinoplasty – reshaping and refining the nose – remains one of the most popular cosmetic surgeries available today. According to a recent study conducted by the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAP'S), the procedure ranks fourth in a list of most common aesthetic surgeries (after liposuction, breast augmentation and eyelid surgery). Canadian statistics are believed to closely mirror those in the United States.

The procedure involves making incisions in the inside of the nose (and sometimes in the skin separating the nostrils), sculpting and reshaping the underlying bone and cartilage, and redraping the skin over the nose. Patients can expect bruising and swelling but should be able to resume daily activities after about two weeks; strenuous exercise and sports will take a little longer. Dr. Adamson cautions that it will take up to a full year for the final results of the surgery to be seen.

Rhinoplasty costs \$4,000 and up.

## FACIAL IMPLANTS

A weak chin or hollow cheeks can be augmented with silicone implants to create a more pleasing profile or give definition to cheekbones. For chin implants (mentoplasty), the surgeon makes an incision in the crease of the chin and fashions a "pocket" for the implant over the bone. For implants in the cheek, incisions are made inside the mouth and the implant is secured in place in pockets overtop the cheekbones. Liposuction can also be used to redefine the chin or neckline.

Often, says Dr. Adamson, Chin implants are done in conjunction with rhinoplasty, because the nose and the chin work together to create an attractive profile. A chin implant will cost about \$3,500, and cheek implants will cost \$6,000 and up.

## LIPOSUCTION

Love handles, saddlebags and bellies are all targets of liposuction, the most popular form of aesthetic surgery in North America. During the procedure, a narrow tube called a canula is inserted through incisions in the skin to suck out fat.

Older liposuction techniques often removed too much fat, which could lead to a scarred, bumpy effect or more serious health complications. Today's technology, however, provides a safer, more sculpted result. Tumescence liposuction involves injecting the area to be treated with saline solution. The solution, which also contains an anaesthetic, makes it easier to remove fat cells and provides more room for the doctor to manoeuvre. For more stubborn areas, ultrasonic liposuction uses sound waves to emulsify fat cells and make them easier to remove.

Still, patients need to have realistic expectations of the surgery. "It's not a means of weight control," says Dr. Claudio De Lorenzi of Kitchener, Ont. "It's a means of correcting those areas that are resistant to diet and exercise. It's also a sculpting technique: We can take a large thigh, and make it into a nicer-looking large thigh." The procedure costs about \$1,500 to \$2,500 per area....