

Lip Lift Surgery

Patient Information

Background

The skin of the upper lip can appear disproportionately long, particularly as we age. Lip lift surgery is a simple and effective procedure leading to a more harmonious and balanced face.

What is lip lift surgery?

Lip lift surgery involves the removal of skin to reduce the length of the upper lip. A desirable consequence of this is that it will give some increase in the actual lip show often creating a fuller lip appearance. This technique may be combined with a w plasty mucosal advancement to further enhance the lip fullness.

Is the procedure right for me?

A detailed consultation with your consultant plastic surgeon is essential prior to undergoing any surgical procedure. During the consultation, your surgeon will discuss your area/s of concern, desired improvements, options available (including no treatment at all) and expected outcomes. Your surgeon will examine your face and lips and may take some photographs for your medical records. You will be given a 'cooling-off' period of at least 2 weeks between initial consultation and the date of your operation to ensure you have ample time to reflect on all aspects of the procedure before proceeding (although please bear in mind the waiting lists for our surgeons mean this period is invariably significantly longer).

How is the procedure carried out?

Should lip lift surgery be agreed upon as the most suitable course of treatment, the procedure will be carried out in our newly refurbished operating theatre. After careful evaluation and a discussion regarding the desired result, the treatment area is very precisely marked, and reference lines are drawn. Following the administration of local anaesthetic, a sliver of skin is removed from beneath the nose. The incisions are planned so that the resulting scar will sit close to the folds beneath the nose. When the desired reduction is achieved, the wounds are carefully sutured, and antibiotic cream is applied.

Aftercare and recovery

After surgery it is important to rest to allow the area to settle. You should take it easy for the first 2 days post-surgery, remembering that the less you do, the less you will bruise. As a general rule of thumb, avoid doing anything that would make your face redden during this initial stage of healing. This may range from avoiding hot baths to ensuring you do not exert yourself through lifting, for example. Patients generally experience minimum discomfort after this procedure and healing usually progresses quickly. After surgery the area will bruise a little reaching a maximum after

48 hours, gradually settling over subsequent weeks. Normally, you will need two days off work and will need to avoid vigorous exercise for around four weeks whilst deeper level healing takes place. Showering is permitted on the second post-operative day. Scars tend to be quite red initially, turning to purple and then fading to white. Most patients will form good quality scars over time.

What to expect after surgery

The surgery is usually performed as a day case under local anaesthesia. Our highly experienced medical team will be on hand during your stay to care for your needs. The operation usually takes around one hour to complete. If your surgery is performed as a day case and you go home on the same day. The nose and lip area may feel tight and sore for a day or two following surgery. Simple painkillers should be enough to keep you comfortable.

Risks and Complications

All surgical procedures are associated with risks. Your Surgeon will explain these in detail during initial consultation, enabling you to reach an informed decision on whether you wish to proceed. Serious complications are uncommon, however patients should be aware of the following complications prior to undergoing lip lift surgery-

- Anaesthesia risks including allergic reaction, blood clots, heart attack, stroke and death
- Infection
- Healing problems
- Extrusion of deep stitches
- Loss of blood supply to skin
- Change of the colour of skin
- Bleeding, swelling and bruising
- Asymmetry
- Poor scarring of skin
- Increased or reduced sensation
- Damage to deeper structures
- Unsatisfactory results
- Pain, which may persist
- Change over time
- Allergic reaction
- Possibility of revisional surgery

Results

The results of lip lift surgery are visible immediately after surgery, however it may take up to 6 weeks post-surgery for swelling to settle and for the true result to be seen.

Alternative treatments

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Lip lift surgery is generally the most effective way to achieve a balanced ratio between the upper lip's skin and the total height of the upper and lower lip. Dermal filler injections may offer some degree of subtle benefit as an alternative.

If you experience any problems or have concerns following surgery, please do not hesitate to call our direct patient line for assistance on 07908 891059.

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Patient Pre & Post-Operative Care Guide

Pre-Operative Preparations

2 weeks before surgery-

We would recommend that you start taking Arnica anti-bruising tablets, three times a day, two weeks prior to and two weeks after surgery. These are available from several health and wellbeing stores, including Holland & Barratt.

1 week before surgery-

Avoid Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Nurofen and other similar painkillers one week before and two weeks after surgery. Paracetamol is the safest painkiller to take, if necessary.

Stop taking Vitamin E and its compounds (such as evening primrose oil, fish oils, garlic and garlic capsules) 1 week before surgery and 2 weeks after surgery. Taking Vitamin E in any form can cause bleeding and post-operative complications.

Day of surgery-

You must take your routine medicines at the usual time, unless advised otherwise and bring them with you (including inhalers).

Remove lenses prior to arrival at the clinic.

You will be discharged from the clinic with steristrips in place on your upper lip. If you think that you may feel self-conscious about this, we recommend that you bring a scarf.

Post-Operative Instructions

Average length of stay-

The surgery will be performed as a day case under a general anaesthetic unless your surgeon advised otherwise during consultation. **Patients should not drive for a minimum of 24 hours post-operatively, so alternative means of transport should be arranged.**

0-2 weeks after surgery

- It is essential to ensure activity is kept to a minimum and to rest as much as possible. The less you do, the less you will bruise
- Shower if you wish and feel free to wash your hair, but please keep the steristrips as dry as possible
- Keep your head up to reduce swelling and sleep with extra pillows to raise your head
- To minimise bruising, avoid bending down, hot baths, heavy lifting and anything else that would naturally cause your face to redden
- Paracetamol can be taken as required

2 days after surgery onwards

- Gentle walks are permitted
- Driving may resume

3 weeks after surgery onwards

- Moderate cardiovascular exercise may resume but do listen to your body- it will tell you if you are overdoing things. Deeper level healing will continue for several weeks and overdoing thing may lead to secondary bruising

6-12 weeks after surgery onwards

- Swimming and more strenuous exercise may resume, as advised by your surgeon at your follow up appointment

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