

nose

by a nose

Sydney ENT and facial plastic surgeon **Dr Michael Zacharia** spoke with Elise Eggleton about achieving natural-looking rhinoplasty results.



One of the greatest fears rhinoplasty patients harbour is that people will look at them in the street and say 'look at that terrible nose job', says Sydney ENT and facial plastic surgeon Dr Michael Zacharia. 'The key to successful rhinoplasty is to make improvements to the appearance and function of the nose, while altering the nose's structure as little as possible.'

Natural-looking noses

Dr Zacharia considers today's rhinoplasty results are more natural-looking than those from the techniques used 20 years ago. 'Today we use a far more conservative technique,' he says. 'Surgeons remove less cartilage and bone and make sure the elements of the face are harmonious together. In the past, surgeons would remove a lot of soft tissue and this could give an artificial appearance to the nose. It could also create problems with the airways. A beautiful cosmetic nose often came at the risk of compromising the nose's functional elements.'

Rhinoplasty is designed to improve each individual's nose and achieve a natural-looking nose that suits each patient's face. It is no longer a routine operation with the same nose for every face. 'The surgeon should take into account a number of things including the patient's face, body, age and sex,' says Dr Zacharia. 'A tiny nose for example would not be suitable for a six-foot-four man.'

According to Dr Zacharia, differences in skin thickness can contribute to different results. 'Patients with thinner skin tend to achieve more defined results,' says Dr Zacharia. 'You could equate it to putting a mitten over a person's hand versus a surgical glove. The hand covered by a surgical glove would obviously have more definition.'

For some patients, rhinoplasty is more than about appearance – it is a means to address functional problems as well. These include obstructed breathing, snoring, sinusitis, and decreased sense of smell and hay fever.

Tissue glue

For several years Dr Zacharia has been incorporating the use of tissue glue in his rhinoplasty procedures to promote healing and decrease swelling. 'The aim of tissue glue is to reduce the space between the skin and bone, thereby simplifying the procedure of graft fixation,' explains Dr Zacharia.

Tissue glue is made from a mix of prothrombin and thrombin – ingredients that mimic the body's clotting system.

'Tissue glue does not replace stitches,' says Dr Zacharia. 'However, it can take the tension off the stitches, which can reduce swelling and decrease the healing time. Tissue glue can also potentially reduce scarring and help with shrinkage of the skin.'

Dr Zacharia also uses tissue glue during facelift and neck lift procedures, abdominoplasty and liposuction of the neck. It is applied using a spray and disintegrates within three to four weeks.

The use of tissue glue in rhinoplasty is quite uncommon, largely due to the cost. 'But, if you are covered by private health insurance, there is a rebate offered,' comments Dr Zacharia.

The nose is considered by many to be the axis of the face. Its function and appearance are often understated, but can have huge implications for a person's quality of life and self-perception. When carried out by an experienced surgeon, rhinoplasty can have an enormously positive impact on an individual's self-esteem and



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Zacharia



BEFORE



AFTER rhinoplasty by Dr Zacharia