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COSMETIC TREATMENTS

New Data Reveals the Most-Requested Surgical Procedures of 2020

What resulted from the drive in aesthetic surgery during the pandemic.

By Olivia Wohlner, Editorial Assistant · Apr 14, 2021



Every year, **The Aesthetic Society** taps its board of top plastic surgeons to collect detailed information about plastic surgery trends and data. Ahead, the most surprising findings from 2020's report.

A Rise in Downtime Made Room for Bigger Surgeries

In March of 2020, the last thing we would have predicted is a rise in plastic surgery procedures. Instead, plastic surgery revenue skyrocketed, finishing with a total revenue of more than \$9 billion. “2020 was a unique year to say the least. We believe there were several factors that came together to drive aesthetic surgery even during the pandemic—the boom in video calls and more opportunity for discreet downtime,” says president of The Aesthetic Society and St. Louis, MI plastic surgeon **Herluf G. Lund, MD**.

According to the report, the most popular body surgeries in 2020 were liposuction, breast augmentation, abdominoplasty (tummy tuck), breast implant removal, and mastopexy (breast lift). Together, these five procedures have brought in a whopping \$6,176,599,828 worth of revenue for the industry, excluding nonsurgical procedures such as dermal fillers and laser treatments. Three top plastic surgeons say that the trends they’ve been seeing in their practices are similar to what The Aesthetic Society reported.

New York plastic surgeon **Elie Levine, MD** says his practice was closed for 25 percent of the year, but even with a few months of zero patient traffic, his overall volume for the year was up significantly. Similar to the report, his three top requests in 2020 were liposuction, abdominoplasty and breast work.

Newport Beach, CA plastic surgeon **Sanjay Grover, MD** adds that out of all the breast procedures he’s performed this year, breast revisions have been his most-requested. “This could be for women who have had children and nursed or have experienced implant malposition,” he says.

The Zoom Boom Was Real

Looking into the Zoom camera may have highlighted room for improvement in the facial area for many of us. The most popular facial plastic surgery procedure of 2020 was the facelift, totaling 56,084 procedures across the globe. Next in line was the browlift, which was performed on a total of 31,404 patients, with facial fat injections coming in third at 28,376 total surgeries.

"In my practice, I noticed that I had much more requests for facial procedures than body procedures," says Tijuana, MX plastic surgeon Juan Carlos Fuentes, MD, noting that his increase in rhinoplasty procedures from 2019 to 2020 was more than 100 percent. "I saw the biggest increase in rhinoplasty requests, as I did 87 rhinoplasties in 2019, and 196 rhinoplasties in 2020. This uptick in facial enhancements is due to people becoming more aware of their faces now that they're on Zoom all day. Alongside rhinoplasties, a lot of patients also got liposuction under the chin, buccal fat pad removal or chin implants."

Dr. Levine says that rhinoplasty requests also skyrocketed in his practice this year, but he adds that the volume of facelifts and fat grafting increased dramatically, too. In Dr. Grover's practice, facelifts have been the most-requested facial procedure. "I've always done facelifts but I've seen a lot more recently and I think this is due to people being able to work from home and people staring at themselves at the Zoom camera. Patients also have more disposable income because they're not traveling. It's not just the Zoom effect—it's a little bit of everything that's been happening in 2020 that's making people want more surgery."

Nonsurgical Trends

A cool \$1,079,779,426 was spent on neurotoxins alone in 2020, with 2,643,366 people requesting the treatment. Dermal fillers were also high on the most-sought-after list—1,313,206 treatments were given in 2020—as were skin treatments such as chemical peels and Hydrofacials, racking up 1,038,968 total treatments. Unsurprisingly, combination lasers also accounted for 280,815 of the 2,190,542 nonsurgical energy treatments performed last year.

"A lot of patients are also coming in for facial contouring with injectables," says Dr. Grover. "I'm noticing a lot of them don't want that filled look, but rather they're looking for a more proportionate look, whether they're looking to fill the temples, chin, or lips."