



It's on our TV screens, in our magazines, it's everywhere we look. There is no doubt that the popularity of Cosmetic Plastic Surgery is on the rise and with it, an acceptance from society for people to adjust the way they look. Be it for a more comfortable appearance, for business purposes, to be more outgoing socially, or to basically become a more confident person, more people are turning to Plastic Surgery to change their appearance. There are a variety of procedures that fall under the category of cosmetic surgery. Such procedures as the facelift, the most popular of plastic surgery practises, is undertaken to appear younger, liposuction, which involves removing fat from the body, is done to appear thinner and breast augmentation, undertaken now by teenage girls, provides ladies with a fuller cleavage. There can be no denying that one's appearance plays a major part in the way others perceive you. Like it or lump it, your general appearance can effect other peoples impressions and there aren't many people out there who wouldn't change something about themselves if given half the chance. But what takes those who think about plastic surgery to actually getting the pricey surgery done? Television shows like Extreme Makeover don't paint the real picture of what plastic surgery entails. The weeks and months that the procedures take are slotted into a one hour television show, which speeds up the perceived time of operation and recovery time. Plastic surgery can involve certain risks, discomfort and pain, weeks of down time and initial periods

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of fear. However, for those who desire surgery enough, this is no barrier. Jodie Murray, a married mother of two, had always thought about breast augmentative surgery, but like many other girls, she was apprehensive about what was involved.

"Having something foreign inside my body scared me. However I spoke to my surgeon and he helped me weigh up the pros and cons of the surgery. The benefits severely outweighed the risks, so I went for the implants."

Jodie has always considered herself a smaller person and after having two children, her breasts only lost more size.

"I didn't like the shape of my breast; in fact I had hardly any breast tissue left after having two children."

Dr Kouros Tavakoli, a top Australian plastic surgeon who operates out of Sydney's Eastern Suburbs (Double Bay) and the Hills District, understands that a woman's breasts are greatly affected by pregnancy and breast feeding.

"Pregnancy and breast feeding cause havoc to a woman's breast shape. After the breast skin and tissue envelope has expanded under the influence of female hormones, the breast tissue regresses leaving the overlying skin to compensate accordingly. Unfortunately, the skin never contracts to its original shape."

The total cost of Jodie's surgery cost over \$9000 and kept Jodie away from her children for two weeks and away from exercise, activity and heavy lifting for six weeks. However when asked if it was all worth it, Jodie doesn't hesitate before answering positively.

"Yes, it was definitely all worth it. I am much more confident now, having that feminine shape. No matter how well I presented myself or how good the rest of my body might have looked, I always thought about how I lacked breast size. I couldn't wear singlets or tighter tops and was really restricted in the sorts of fashion I could wear. I get a lot more attention these days."

Jodie's husband had always told her that she didn't need the operation and was scared about the risks involved; however after Jodie's surgery, he was extremely happy

with the results and couldn't be happier. Dr Kouros Tavakoli has often witnessed the reverse situation in which men push their partners into surgery. However, he doesn't recommend females undertake cosmetic surgery for anyone but themselves.

"The desire to have breast implants is entirely a woman's choice. Generally most partners tend to be in favour of breast enlargement, however, there are those who push their girlfriends/ partners to undergo breast augmentation in order to salvage their relationship. I strongly advise against having any kind of cosmetic surgery based on coercion from one's partner, it has to be the females choice."

While plastic surgery is a process involved with adjusting the body, the benefits are mostly psychological. Breast enlargements take time, money and put the patient through levels of momentary discomfort. But for some, these are only minor hurdles in the search for peace of mind.

