

## Are you happy with your body?

### Discussion

You bump into a woman friend in town. You knew she was thinking of having breast implants and you can see that she has obviously had the operation. What do you say to her?

- Nothing. It's too embarrassing.
- "Wow. Those look great! How much did they cost?"
- "Wow. I'm surprised you can stand up straight!"
- Something else.

Is plastic surgery popular in your country? Is it expensive?

Do you think people who have plastic surgery are too concerned about their looks?

### Reading

Read through the article and answer this question:

*Is there a similar trend in your country?*

#### YOUNGER PLASTIC SURGERY PATIENTS

Surgeons at clinics specialising in plastic surgery are reporting increasingly younger patients, according to a report released recently by the National Association of Plastic Surgery in the United States.

"They want to look like the people they see in films or the models they see in magazines. It's becoming an obsession," said one doctor in a beauty clinic in California. "Last week we had a woman in here who, at 30, said she was looking too old and wanted a facelift. I told her to come back and see me in 15 years."

The average age for patients undergoing plastic surgery over the last year was 32, down from 34 just the year before. In England recently, a 15-year-old girl was in the news for announcing that her parents were going to pay for breast enlargements as her 16th birthday present.

Her mother said, "If it makes her happy and gives her more chance of success in life, then what is the problem?" Though women still dominate the plastic surgery scene, men are growing increasingly concerned with their physical appearance and are doing something about it. According to the report, men now make up 39% of all surgeries performed — that's an increase of nearly 20% from last year.

One man, who wished to remain anonymous, said he got his liposuction — removal of excess fat — after pressure from his wife. "She's a very athletic woman and, well, I enjoy a good steak." Liposuction tops the list of plastic surgery performed on men, followed by hair implants and breast reduction. For women the top order is still breast enlargement, followed by liposuction and facelifts.

Read through the article again and answer these questions:

- Why are younger people turning to plastic surgery?
- Why did the doctor refuse plastic surgery to one patient?
- Why is plastic surgery now more popular with men?
- Why did the man have liposuction?

### Discussion

Do you think the number of men who want plastic surgery will eventually equal, or even surpass, the number of women?

Read again what the mother of the 15-year-old girl said. Do you agree with her?

## Language

Match these types of plastic surgery solutions to the problems below:

*breast enlargement*

*rhinoplasty (nose job)*

*facelift*

*hair implant*

*varicose vein removal*

*tummy tuck*

1. "This thing on my face is an atrocity. I'm surprised birds don't sit on it or that lightning doesn't strike it in thunderstorms."
2. "I hate them. I can't wear shorts or a bikini because they stick out, especially on the back of my thighs. They're the ugliest things I've ever seen and they're getting worse every year because I have bad circulation."
3. "I started receding really badly at the age of 23. My wife says she doesn't mind, but I hate it. I mean, I'm not completely bald or anything, but I constantly wear hats and baseball caps because I'm so self-conscious about it. I could never wear a wig."
4. "I hate being flat-chested. The boys at school used to call me 'ironing-board'. Imagine! I think I have a pretty face but I don't feel confident about myself from the chin down. I would like to feel good about wearing a tight sweater or a low-cut dress."
5. "I used to have such a youthful, vibrant-looking face. Now my skin just sags. I think I look twice my age."
6. "No matter what I do, my belly sticks out. I think it has something to do with my posture. If I could just get a flat stomach, I wouldn't feel so bad about looking at myself sideways in the mirror."

Which of the above treatments are most popular in your country? Are there any other ones that were not mentioned?

If you had the problems above and plenty of money, would you have the surgery? Tell your partner what you would do for each problem.

## Discussion

In a survey of 37,500 girls aged 12 to 15, more than half listed appearance as their biggest worry.

What do you think is the reason for this? Is it a worrying statistic?

Are you happy with your size and weight? Is there a part of your body that you would like to change (i.e. make smaller, make bigger)?

Here is an alternative point of view from a culture where people take a different view of size:

"I must eat so I'll be fat and people won't laugh at my figure," explains one of the women in a fattening room in Calabar, Southern Nigeria. "Nobody will marry me if I don't get fatter." Women come from all over Nigeria to put on extra pounds at these fattening rooms. "We can make any woman obese," boasts the owner. "They will get a husband after their stay here, no problem." The women eat all day and avoid moving so they don't burn off any calories. "It's a bit tiring eating all the time, but I know when I come out I will be attractive, healthy and beautiful," said the woman we spoke to.

Do you think it will be fashionable to be fat one day?