



PLASTIC SURGERY

by the Numbers

Last year, 1.7 million Americans went in for a little nip and tuck. Here are a few key figures to help you understand who's getting what done (and why), plus the must-know facts if you're considering joining their ranks. by BARBARA BRODY

46

Percent of patients who multitask by having more than one procedure at the same time.

813

Percent increase in the popularity of upper-arm lifts, which eliminate excess skin, since 1997. "Even women who work out regularly find it difficult to tone this area with exercise," says Imber. A new technique that hides the incision in your armpit means no one has to know why you suddenly have such sleek, shapely arms.

313,011

Number of women who opted to slim saddlebags, tummy pooches, and other isolated areas of fat via liposuction.

350,000

Number of 30- to 39-year-olds who went under the knife last year. If you're debating whether to schedule an appointment now or delay it for another decade, know that certain procedures, such as eyelid surgery to remove bags, work best on younger people. "Those who wait until they're older will develop stretching and sagging that also needs to be repaired," explains Gerald Imber, M.D., a New York plastic surgeon and clinical assistant professor of surgery (plastic) at Weill Cornell Medical Center.

204,000

Number of surgical procedures performed on men. What guys are having done (in order of popularity): lipo, rhinoplasty, eyelid surgery, breast reduction, and ear surgery.

330,631

Number of breast augmentations done last year. While a bigger bust is the most commonly requested goal (and has been since 2006), breast lifts are popular too: About 128,000 women had sagging surgically corrected. At nearly 113,000, breast reductions weren't far behind.

\$6,607

Average cost of a face-lift, which makes it the most expensive popular procedure. Eyelid surgery, the most commonly requested facial enhancement, runs around \$2,700.

Stay Safe

Be sure to ask a potential provider these questions:

➔ **Are you board-certified, and in what specialty?**

Many different physicians perform cosmetic procedures, but you wouldn't want a gynecologist giving you a face-lift. (Leave that to the plastic surgeons.) Check out a doc's credentials at certificationmatters.org.

➔ **How many times have you done this procedure?**

There's no exact "right" answer, says Imber, but you want someone with as much experience as possible. (Think triple or quadruple digits.)

➔ **Does the surgical facility meet the highest safety standards?** Ask if it's certified by the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (aaaasf.org).