

DR. JENSEN'S
10-STEP GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL
COSMETIC SURGERY



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WELCOME

Congratulations on taking the first step in becoming an educated patient! If you are reading this ebook, you understand the importance of learning all the facts before deciding if cosmetic surgery is right for you. This guide will help you achieve a successful cosmetic surgery experience. It is intended to provide you with knowledge so you can make informed decisions about your health and appearance and attain the best results possible.

However, this book is not intended to replace meaningful communication with your plastic surgeon. If you have any other questions after reading this ebook, I strongly suggest discussing them directly with your plastic surgeon of choice. Do not follow the advice included in this book without first consulting your physician.

To set up a consultation with Dr. Jensen, please call the office at 541-770-6776.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Step 1: Decide if Cosmetic Surgery is Right for You	1
Step 2: Find the Right Surgeon	4
Step 3: Prepare for Your Consultation	8
Step 4: Understand the Procedure	10
Step 5: Understand the Risks	12
Step 6: Understand the Recovery Process	16
Step 7: Understand the Costs	19
Step 8: Plan Your Surgery	21
Step 9: Have Your Surgery	24
Step 10: Maintain Your Result	27
Thank You!	29

STEP 1: DECIDE IF COSMETIC SURGERY IS RIGHT FOR YOU

Making the decision to have plastic surgery is a very personal process. There are many reasons for having cosmetic surgery. Some people wish to regain a youthful appearance, reduce wrinkles, repair damaged skin, or reverse the effects of gravity. Some people hope to regain their pre-pregnancy figures, offset a weight gain, or tighten skin after a weight loss. And some want to change an inherited trait or fix a physical deformity. Having cosmetic surgery can help you look and feel your best, increase your self-confidence, and help you expose your inner (as well as outer) beauty.

Be Honest With Yourself

If you are considering cosmetic surgery, take an honest look at your reasons for having the surgery. Why do you want cosmetic surgery? What are your goals? Are your expectations realistic? Are you undergoing the surgery for yourself or for someone else? Look in the mirror and envision your body after the procedure. Would you be happier, more confident after the change? If the answer is yes, and one of your main reasons for having surgery is to boost your self-esteem, you may be a good candidate for cosmetic surgery.

If the answer is no, cosmetic surgery is not for you. Never undergo cosmetic surgery because someone else (such as a spouse, partner, boss, or friend) wants you to. Many cosmetic surgeries create permanent results, and you may regret the decision if you change your mind later down the road.

Set Realistic Expectations

When considering a cosmetic procedure, it is of paramount importance to set realistic expectations. The number one cause of disappointment following a procedure is not a subpar surgical performance, but rather, an unrealistic

expectation. Cosmetic surgery will not make other people treat you differently, get you a better or higher-paying job, or help you win back an old flame. Cosmetic surgery will change your appearance, which may profoundly influence your self-perception, but it will not change other aspects of your life. Also, there are limits to what each procedure can achieve. Look at your surgeon's before-and-after pictures to see what types of results are typical for a procedure. Keep in mind that every person's body responds to surgery differently. No result can be replicated exactly.

You also have to be okay with the financial costs, the physical discomfort, the potential risks and complications, the recovery time, and any social stresses that may be caused by a cosmetic procedure. (Each of these points is discussed in this book.) Educate yourself about these factors and prepare yourself accordingly.

Resolve Conflict and Set Up a Support System

Some patients are conflicted about having cosmetic surgery. One reason for this inner turmoil is that they see cosmetic surgery as a selfish endeavor. Usually these types of patients have centered their lives on the needs of others, consistently putting their own needs last. They feel guilty spending money on themselves. If you have such feelings of guilt, try to resolve them before you commit to having the surgery. Such guilt could lead to post-surgery depression. Give yourself permission to treat yourself.

Another reason some patients are conflicted is because a friend or family member close to them is critical of cosmetic surgery. Some common misconceptions are that people who undergo cosmetic surgery are vain, spoiled, or foolish. While it's okay for others to have their own opinions, it's not okay for them to try to force those opinions onto you. Avoid telling these types of people about your surgery. You don't need that sort of negativity in your life. Instead, seek out a friend or family member who will be supportive of your decision.

Before you commit to having cosmetic surgery, make sure that you have a support system in place. Surgery can be physically and emotionally demanding, and recovery may take some time. Most likely, you will need someone to help you recover. Do you have someone you can trust to help you recuperate? If so, ask them in advance if they'd be willing to help you.

If you are undergoing surgery for the right reasons, setting realistic expectations, resolving conflict, and setting up a support system, cosmetic surgery can be an exciting and fulfilling journey.

STEP 2: FIND THE RIGHT SURGEON

Choosing the right plastic surgeon may seem like a daunting task. You've probably heard an overwhelming number of horror stories about cosmetic procedures gone wrong, but you also know that cosmetic surgery can be a safe and personally satisfying experience. Understandably, you want to choose an experienced surgeon that upholds safety standards and produces great results. But how do you achieve that goal?

Choose a Surgeon Certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)

First, you must realize that not all institutions offering cosmetic surgery procedures are qualified to do so. In fact, any person with a medical degree can legally perform cosmetic surgery even if that doctor never trained in plastic surgery. Today's deceptive advertising tactics muddy the issue even further. For example, the term *board-certified* means very little unless it is followed by the phrase "by the American Board of Plastic Surgery." Hundreds of self-designated medical boards exist that sound legitimate (such as *The American Board of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons* or *The American Board of Cosmetic Plastic Surgery* or *The American Board of Plastic Esthetic Surgeons*), but these boards are unregulated. Some exist solely to promote their members, and a certification from these self-designated boards does not ensure a surgeon's competency.

The leading plastic surgery board is the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS). It is the most well-known and respected organization of plastic surgery professionals, and the only one recognized by American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS). It has very strict and highly-regulated membership requirements: the surgeon has to have a degree from an accredited medical school, have specialty training in the field of plastic surgery, pass a comprehensive written, oral, and practical exam, present a list of all operations performed to be evaluated by the board, maintain hospital privileges, take regular

examinations to maintain board certification, and engage in the practice of plastic surgery as his or her major professional activity. The ABPS will not certify a general physician who has decided to do cosmetic procedures on the side to increase revenue.

Choose a Surgeon Recognized by the American Society for Aesthetic and Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) or American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)

Membership in ASAPS or ASPS ensures that a doctor not only is board-certified by ABPS in cosmetic surgery, but also has significant experience in cosmetic surgery. ASAPS membership is by invitation only. It requires surgeons to have at least three years' experience in plastic surgery, participate in accredited continuing education courses, and adhere to the certain ethical standards. Similarly, ASPS requires that the doctor have at least six years' experience in medical training and at least three years' experience in plastic surgery specifically.

Choose a Surgeon with Hospital Privileges

Before a surgeon can perform a procedure in a hospital, he or she has to be evaluated by a hospital review committee. The committee carefully reviews a surgeon's training and competency in performing specific procedures. Many surgeons prefer to do their procedures at their own surgical centers or office-based facilities, if they have them, but before you select a surgeon to perform a specific procedure, make sure he or she also has the privileges to perform the same procedure at the hospital.

In addition, ensure the surgeon performs procedures in an accredited facility.

Accredited facilities have to maintain a good safety record and fulfill strict requirements; their surgery settings must be comparable to a hospital surgery setting. Cosmetic surgery procedures can safely be performed in accredited hospitals, surgical centers, or office-based surgical facilities. However, the majority of office-based surgical facilities are not accredited. One advantage of checking the surgeon's ASAPS membership is that he or she must perform surgery in an accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified facility.

Choose an Experienced Surgeon

Some surgeons can be extremely competent in one procedure and have little experience in another. Ask your surgeon how many times he or she has performed the procedure you're considering. You definitely do not want to choose a surgeon who is performing a procedure for the first time because the results will not be as predictable. You may not even wish to be among the first fifty patients to undergo the procedure, during which time, a surgeon is working out the kinks in his or her technique. Good plastic surgeons perform a wide array of procedures on a regular basis. If you are considering a completely new technique, you should research medical journals about the safety of the procedure.

Ask for a Recommendation

Another way to find a plastic surgeon is to ask a friend or relative who has had cosmetic surgery for a recommendation. The best sign of a good plastic surgeon is recommendations from happy clients. If a friend or relative is pleased with the results of a surgery, it is likely that you will be similarly satisfied.

You could also ask your family care practitioner, gynecologist, or another trusted physician for a recommendation. The medical community is tight-knit, and many medical professionals know which cosmetic surgeons are exceptional and which ones you should avoid. In addition, if other doctors are going to your surgeon for their plastic surgery needs, you can be sure that surgeon is known for adhering to safety codes and providing the best results.

Look at the Surgeon's Before-and-After Pictures

Most plastic surgeons keep a collection of before-and-after pictures in their offices or on their websites. Take a look at the results to see if you like the doctor's surgical style. Plastic surgeons are trained in different locations throughout the country, and each training program teaches their own surgical techniques. For example, rhinoplasty and breast augmentation surgical styles can vary widely. Pay particular attention to the photographs of the patients who have had the procedure you're

considering. If you are happy with the results, and the plastic surgeon is certified by the ABPS, consider scheduling a consultation with the physician.

Schedule a Consultation

Before you make your final decision, schedule a consultation with your cosmetic surgeon of choice. During the consultation, you can evaluate the physician. Feel free to ask a lot of questions. (We will review a typical list of questions in the next chapter.) Does the cosmetic surgeon answer your questions fully and graciously? Is the cosmetic surgeon polite and helpful? You have to be comfortable with your surgeon. After all, you are trusting this person to operate on you.

STEP 3: PREPARE FOR YOUR CONSULTATION

The purpose of a consultation is to evaluate the cosmetic surgeon's credentials, skill, and experience and to gain insight into whether or not a cosmetic procedure is right for you. You have a responsibility to yourself to make sure you find a surgeon that will be able to accomplish what you want safely.

Prepare a List of Questions

Before you meet with a plastic surgeon, prepare a list of questions. Below are some questions to ask potential plastic surgeons; they will help you choose which surgeon will be the best candidate to perform your procedure.

- Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)?
- Are you a member of the American Society for Aesthetic and Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) or American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)?
- Do you have hospital privileges?
- Are you performing the procedure in an accredited facility?
- How many times have you performed this procedure?
- Have you operated on other surgeons, doctors, or medical professionals in the area?
- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- Can I look at your before-and-after pictures? Are these results typical?
- What type of outcome can I realistically expect from having this procedure?
- What are the risks involved in the surgery?
- How will you avoid the telltale signs of cosmetic surgery?
- What kind of follow-up care do you offer?
- How long will be the recovery?
- How much pain or discomfort should I expect?
- How much time should I take off work?

- What is the total cost of the surgery, including labs, office visits, and anesthesia?
- Is there anything else I need to know about this procedure?

These questions should provide you with a basis for helping you choose the right plastic surgeon. However, if you have any other questions, you should not hesitate to ask them in your consultation. Plastic surgeons should be open to such questioning and provide you with as much information about your procedure as possible.

Bring in Your Medical History

During your consultation, your plastic surgeon will want to evaluate your health so he or she can determine whether the procedure is a good fit for you. To achieve the most thorough evaluation, bring in copies of your basic medical records, including a list of your allergies, current medications, past surgeries or illnesses, and any pertinent medical information about your immediate family members. Do not falsify any of this information in the hopes that a surgeon will treat you when doing so may put your overall health at risk. The number one priority of any surgeon should be your safety.

Bring in Photos to Illustrate Your Goals or Expectations for the Procedure

Another good idea is to bring in a photograph of the kind of results you'd like to achieve with you to your consultation. This visual tool will give your plastic surgeon a clearer idea of your goals. It will also help you open a dialogue about whether your goals are realistic. You want a surgeon who will be truthful with you, not one who will give you false assurances. You may bring in an image from the internet, a magazine, or from the doctor's own before-and-after pictures. But remember, no surgeon can replicate the results in a photograph exactly. Have an open, honest discussion with your cosmetic surgeon about what kind of results you can realistically expect.

STEP 4: UNDERSTAND THE PROCEDURE

Before booking a surgery, you need to understand what a procedure can and can't do. For example, there are many different kinds of procedures that treat wrinkles: laser resurfacing, chemical peels, fat injections, BOTOX® treatments, facelifts, brow lifts, etc. Each procedure uses different techniques and yields different results. Some procedures focus on one area of the face, and others function as more general treatments. Some procedures are more invasive and require more recovery time; some are less invasive, and you can return to work the next day. And some procedures are more effective than others.

Your best resource for understanding your procedure will be your plastic surgeon. He or she should help you understand what combination of treatments will be best for you specifically, what techniques will be used during your procedures, where your incisions will be, what kind of anesthetic will be used, and what kind of results your procedure will typically yield. But you can also research your procedure before your consultation or enhance your knowledge about your procedure after your consultation. Below are some good resources for you to peruse.

Credible Internet Resources

In today's world, many people turn to the internet for information. Unfortunately, not all information on the internet is factual or trustworthy. The websites and organizations below, however, are sources you can trust.

- **The ASPS Website (www.plasticsurgery.org)** – This user-friendly website maintains a list of common cosmetic procedures. Each procedure is explained in detail, typical before-and-after pictures are provided, and a 3-D animation tool is available so you can see a 3-D version of your body with the predicted results. The website also has a question-and-answer forum.

- ***The ASAPS Website (www.surgery.org)*** – The main goal of this website is to provide patients with safety information. It provides safety tips, discusses how to check a surgeon's credentials, provides guidelines and checklists before choosing surgery, and relays any relevant news or new developments in the field of plastic surgery.
- ***Your Trusted Local Hospital*** - Most public and private hospitals have websites that explain common cosmetic and reconstructive procedures.

Before-and-After Photographs

Before-and-after photographs can help you plainly see what a procedure can and can't do. From these images, you can learn the difference between an eyelid lift and a forehead lift, or the difference between smart lipo mpx and traditional liposuction. They help you envision how each procedure may change your body. (For more information on before-and-after pictures, refer to Step 2.)

Other Resources

Your doctor's office may also provide informational pamphlets about your procedure. During your consultation, ask your plastic surgeon if such pamphlets are available. Also, if you know someone who has gone through the same procedure, you may consider asking them about their experiences.

STEP 5: UNDERSTAND THE RISKS

Every surgery involves some risk. If you lead an active, healthy lifestyle and do not have any significant medical conditions, then your risk is much lower. However, many factors can contribute to complications. Your surgeon should be open with you and discuss all of the possible risks and side effects of your procedure. Your surgeon should also explain to you what to do in the event that there are any complications.

Smoking, Drinking, and Other Lifestyle Choices

In general, you should adopt healthy daily habits before considering surgery. Some people may be considered poor candidates for surgery because of certain lifestyle choices that could seriously affect their safety in the operating room or their ability to recover after surgery.

Smoking reduces the body's ability to recover from surgery. Smokers and individuals regularly exposed to second-hand smoke have a higher rate of infection, skin separation, skin death, and complications while under anesthesia. Not only does nicotine slow the healing process and increase the risk of complications, but it can also lead to unsatisfactory results. At Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, we insist that patients stop smoking for at least two weeks prior to surgery.

Alcohol may reduce the body's ability to form clots, increase bleeding, or increase your chances of developing a hematoma. At Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, we ask that you abstain from alcohol for at least three days prior to surgery.

Drastic and frequent weight fluctuations reduces the body's ability to heal, due to the lack of nutrients and vitamins in the body. Other lifestyle factors that could affect the outcome of your surgery include high stress levels, sun exposure, obesity, and unusual

sleeping habits. Some individuals may be told that they need to change their habits before they can be considered for surgery.

Medications

Some over-the-counter medications, prescription medications, diet pills, vitamin supplements, and herbal medications have been tied to some serious postoperative complications. Be sure to fully disclose all medications you are currently taking or plan on taking to your cosmetic surgeon. Your surgeon will tell you from which medications and supplements you need to abstain.

Severe Medical Conditions

Serious medical conditions make surgery inadvisable for a small percentage of patients. Be honest with your physician about your medical history, medical conditions, and any previous illnesses or surgeries. If you do have an inhibitive medical condition, your physician may be able to suggest an alternative, less invasive procedure that would work for you. Remember, your safety should be your physician's number one priority.

A List of Possible Complications

Below is a list of possible complications to help you better understand and assess the risk of surgery. But remember, your best resource for understanding the risks of your specific procedure is your plastic surgeon.

- **Numbness or Tingling** – Temporary numbness or tingling is expected after some surgeries, such as after a tummy tuck or liposuction. However, persistent numbness is not typical. In the majority of cases, sensory perception eventually returns to normal.
- **Redness and Swelling** – Redness and swelling is normal after most surgeries and may cause discomfort or itchiness. However, if the redness or swelling is substantial and accompanied by a yellow or green discharge, a hardening of the

surrounding areas, excessive bleeding, or increasing pain, you may have an infection, hematoma, or other more serious complication.

- **Infection** – Infection is caused by bacteria growing at the surgical site. Most infections are minor, affecting only the skin around the surgical incision. However, serious infections can occur. Infection is usually treated with antibiotics. Sometimes, stitches are removed to allow the infection to drain. In serious cases, hospitalization, intravenous antibiotics, or additional surgery may be necessary.
- **Hematoma** – A hematoma is an accumulation of blood by the surgical site. Symptoms include bruising, redness, swelling, and pain. Small hematomas usually resolve on their own. But large hematomas could lead to more serious conditions such as infection, blood clots, or skin death and may need to be surgically removed, which may cause more visible scarring.
- **Seroma** – Seroma is an accumulation of clear fluid by the surgical site. For some procedures, such as a tummy tuck, it is common practice for your plastic surgeon to insert plastic drainage tubes to prevent seroma. These tubes are removed during a follow-up visit. Most seromas can be removed in the office by inserting a needle into the affected area.
- **Skin Death** – Skin death can sometimes occur due to poor circulation around the surgical site. This rare complication is usually preceded by infection or hematoma and is most common in smokers. Skin death is treated by surgically removing the dead skin and allowing the surviving skin to heal, which may cause more visible scarring.
- **Complications while under Anesthesia** – General anesthesia, as opposed to sedation anesthesia or local anesthesia, carries its own risks: pneumonia, stroke, heart attack, and blood clots. If you have a history of cardiovascular disease, lung disease, or obesity, you are at a higher risk for developing these complications.
- **Complications from Anesthesia** – Most patients feel fuzzy after surgery, but they regain clarity as soon as the anesthesia wears off. Other common side effects from anesthesia include nausea, sore throat, or sleepiness. Confusion or

delirium can sometimes occur in rare cases, usually in older patients, and can last for several weeks or months.

- **Unsatisfactory Outcome** – Another risk of surgery is not achieving your desired look or goal. Most of the time, this disappointment is usually due to unrealistic expectations. (See Step 1.) In some cases, however, the surgery may have failed to correct the original problem or caused a new problem, such as asymmetry. If you experience moderate to severe asymmetry, you may need to undergo a revision surgery to correct the error.

What to Do if You Experience a Complication

If you experience any complications, call your doctor right away. At Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, we have an twenty-four-hour call-in service. In case of an emergency, call 911.

STEP 6: UNDERSTAND THE RECOVERY PROCESS

Recovery is a very individualized process. Some patients recover from surgery with minimal pain, discomfort, and fatigue. Others require additional rest, medication, or surgical intervention. In this chapter, we will discuss how to handle your work or familial duties, manage your pain, care for your wounds, and follow-up during post-operative visits.

Recovery Takes Time

Many patients underestimate the time and effort required to recover. Some unrealistically expect to be back to work or return to their routines the next day. Even when everything goes well, surgery applies stress on your body. You will need to be patient with yourself, get plenty of rest, and drink a lot of fluids.

In most cases, you will need to take time off of work to rest and recuperate. Your surgeon will let you know how much time you will need to take off of work given your procedure and health. If you do not feel comfortable telling your boss and coworkers about your cosmetic surgery, then you might wish to tell them you are taking a vacation at home or having general surgery. If you are undergoing a procedure that requires general anesthesia, do not expect to return to work the next day.

After some surgeries, your doctor may ask you to refrain from daily activities, such as working, driving, walking for extended periods, cooking, caring for children, or doing chores, in which case, you will need someone on hand to tend to your basic needs. Ask a friend or relative to stay with you for at least the first night. If you cannot find a friend to stay with you, consider hiring a private-duty nurse; your doctor may be able to make some good recommendations.

Try not to get frustrated by your inability to accomplish small tasks. If you follow your doctor's instructions, you'll recover more quickly, whereas if you don't follow your doctor's instructions, you could increase recovery time, or worse, increase the likelihood of procuring a complication. Bottom line: get help, rest, take adequate time off from work, and follow your doctor's instructions.

Managing Pain

Pain and discomfort are normal side effects of surgery. Even though most patients understand this truth before committing to surgery, some patients are still taken off guard by the pain following surgery. If you are particularly susceptible to pain, your doctor may recommend using long-lasting anesthetic (bupivacaine). While bupivacaine does not eliminate pain, it will decrease the amount of pain and discomfort you feel. The effect usually lasts for twelve to twenty-four hours after surgery.

Your surgeon may also prescribe you a pain medication to help alleviate pain. Be sure to handle these medications responsibly; follow the doctor's instructions on how and when to take them. If you feel your pain medication isn't helping, or if you are experiencing unwanted side effects from the pain medication, call your doctor, and he or she may be able to prescribe you something else.

Rest, ice, and elevation will also help you manage your pain levels and decrease swelling and bruising. Again, some discomfort is expected following surgery. However, if your pain is steadily increasing or at reaching unbearable levels, call your doctor immediately as it may be an indication of a more serious condition or complication.

Caring for Your Wounds

Your doctor should provide you with post-operative care instructions. Make sure you follow these instructions carefully. Depending on your procedure, you may be asked to avoid the sun, keep your head, arms, or feet elevated, apply ice packs for two to three days, change bandages and dressings regularly, or apply ointment to the surgical site.

You may also be asked to keep the surgical incision area dry, which means you will need to refrain from bathing or showering for one or two days.

Returning to Work

Your doctor will tell you when it is safe for you to return to work. Depending on your occupation and procedure, you will most likely be able to return to work between three days and two weeks. Do not return to work before you are ready as you can overstress your body. If you are still taking pain medication, expect that you will not be at your peak performance. Do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or lift weights while on pain medication.

Post-operative Office Visits

Good surgical care does not begin and end in the operating room. All plastic surgeons should check the progress of your recovery after the surgery during post-operative visits. Depending on your procedure, you will have one or more follow-up appointments, during which your surgeon will check the progress of your healing, remove any stitches or drainage tubes, and assess the surgical results. Absorbable sutures will not need to be removed.

In addition, you should never feel inhibited from contacting your surgeon if a question arises about your recovery. Patients at Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery are encouraged to call in with any questions or concerns.

STEP 7: UNDERSTAND THE COSTS

The cost of a cosmetic procedure may vary considerably depending on geographic location, the surgeon's experience, and individual patient needs. Every patient is different, and surgeons have to adapt accordingly. Surgeons cannot (and should not) use the same techniques on all patients. The complexity and length of a surgery can also affect the cost. In your consultation, your surgeon should provide you with an estimate of your surgical costs, including any fees.

The Price of Cosmetic Surgery

You can price compare when looking for a cosmetic surgeon, but avoid choosing your surgeon based on price alone. Surgeons with more experience may have higher pricing. Instead, choose your surgeon based on his or her credentials, training, and outside recommendations. And definitely be sure to go with a surgeon who puts you at ease.

Beware of Hidden Fees

Most cosmetic surgery centers have fees and other operating costs that can increase the cost of your surgery. Your surgeon should be upfront about these fees and include them in your estimate. Below is a list of common fees.

- Surgeon's Fee
- Anesthesia fee
- Facility or Operating Room Fee
- Implant Fee

During your consultation, be sure to ask about these fees. You don't want to be surprised with any hidden fees after your surgery. At Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, all fees will be included in your estimate during your initial consultation.

Insurance Coverage

Cosmetic surgery is an elective procedure, which means that many insurance companies will not cover the cost of the surgery. However, some insurance companies do cover the cost of reconstructive procedures, such as breast reconstruction, breast reduction, and functional nasal reconstruction. At Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, we work with the following insurance companies.

- Aetna*
- Atrio Medicare
- CHIPS
- Cigna*
- Coventry/First Health
- Health Net*
- Lifewise
- Medicare
- ODS
- Pacific Source
- Providence Health
- Providence Preferred
- BCBS/Regence
- United Health Care

* If you have Aetna, Cigna, or Health Net insurance, please be advised that our facility is out of network, which means that your insurance will cover less of the cost, and you will be responsible for the difference.

Financing Options

Some plastic surgery centers offer financing options, which allow you to pay over time as opposed to in one lump sum. As a courtesy, the Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery works with [Care Credit](#) to offer you various payment options.

STEP 8: PLAN YOUR SURGERY

By the time you reach the planning phase of your surgery, you will have found a trustworthy plastic surgeon, decided to move forward with a cosmetic procedure, and paid for your surgery. Now that things have been set in motion, you may be getting excited about the prospect of your new look. But your work still isn't finished! Having cosmetic surgery requires careful thought and planning.

Take Time Off of Work

Your surgeon will work with you to set a date for your surgery. Make sure that you arrange adequate time off from work. Depending on your procedure, you will need to take off between three days and two weeks. Remember, recovery takes time. (Refer to Step 6 for more information about understanding the recovery process.)

Order Medications

When you schedule your surgery, your surgeon should provide you with pre-operative care instructions. These instructions will most likely include a list of medications and other items to order before the day of your surgery; this list may include pain medications, sedatives, blood thinners, or medicated soaps. Fill your prescriptions early. In some cases, you will need to take a medication a few days before surgery. If you do not follow your pre-operative instructions, you will have to reschedule your surgery. In addition, you don't want to be hustling to the pharmacy after surgery because you forgot to order your pain medications.

Find a Ride and Find Care

Arrange for someone to drop you off at the surgical facility on the day of your surgery. You should also arrange for someone to drive you home following surgery. In most cases, you will not be able to drive yourself home. You should never drive while under the influence of pain medications. Ask a friend or relative to stay with you and care for

you for at least the first night. If you do not feel comfortable asking a friend or relative to care for you, hire a private-duty nurse. (Refer to Step 6 for more information about the importance of finding care.)

Set up Your Home

After some surgeries, your mobility may be limited. Set up your kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom so that the items you use most frequently are within easy reach. Take things off of high shelves and put them at counter height. Stock up on groceries and favorite foods and drinks. Purchase easy-to-make meals or cook meals in advance and freeze them. I'd also suggest setting up your own recovery room area with comfortable blankets and pillows, fun reading materials, good movies, and a music player.

Prepare Yourself Physically

Surgery is a physically demanding endeavor. You will want to be in peak physical condition before undergoing surgery. Eat healthy, exercise, and practice good sleeping habits. Stop smoking at least two weeks before your surgery—or sooner, if possible. Abstain from alcohol for at least three days before your surgery. If your doctor told you to stop taking certain prescription medications, herbal medications, or over-the-counter medications, do so. And follow any other directions your surgeon may have given you.

Prepare Yourself Emotionally

Make sure that you have set up an emotional support system for your recovery. This support system may include friends, relatives, or hired help. (For more information on how to set up an emotional support system, refer to Step 1.) You will also need to decide what to tell others about your surgery. You will want others to notice how wonderful you look, but you also may not want them to attribute your new look to surgery. Because cosmetic surgery has become a mainstream phenomenon in recent years, some people are comfortable being open and upfront about their surgeries. They find that their friends are excited for them. Others prefer to keep their surgeries private. Only you can decide what tactic is best for you.

If you would like to keep your surgery a secret, I suggest coming up with a concrete plan on how to account for your new look. Most people instinctively attribute changes in appearance to rest, weight loss, make-up, or a new wardrobe—not to surgery. In the past, I have had patients tell their friends and coworkers that they were going on vacation. A forehead lift or eyelid surgery could be attributed to rest and relaxation. Other patients have purchased new clothing or make-up. A facelift could be attributed to a new set of colorful cosmetics or a new hairstyle. A tummy tuck could be attributed to weight loss or a new outfit. Come up with a plan. That way, when someone compliments you on how rested or youthful you look, all you will have to do is say thank you.

STEP 9: HAVE YOUR SURGERY

When the day of your surgery arrives, you may be experiencing a lot of different emotions: excitement, happiness, nervousness, worry. You may be elated about your prospective new look. Or you may be worried about the possibility of a complication or that you won't be satisfied with the aesthetic result. You may even be experiencing these emotions simultaneously. These emotional swings are normal. Take a deep breath and follow the plan you have carefully laid out for yourself.

Stay Calm

On the day of your surgery, try to stay calm. Stress can cause many negative side effects. For example, anxiousness can spike your adrenalin. An adrenalin rush increases your heart rate and blood pressure. In addition, patients with a high doses of adrenaline may need more anesthetics or narcotics to obtain acceptable levels of anesthesia. While higher levels of anesthetics and narcotics won't affect the aesthetic results of your surgery, they may increase your fuzziness post-surgery. If you are experiencing anxiety, try to do some meditation or breathing techniques. In addition, your doctor may have prescribed you a sedative to help you relax. Some physicians prescribe them routinely to ensure that your surgery goes smoothly. Be sure to follow your doctor's instructions when taking all medications.

While pre-surgery jitters are completely normal, if you have any serious doubts about undergoing surgery, try to discuss them with your surgeon as early as possible. Do not undergo surgery if you are unsure about your choice, but also do not wait until the day of surgery to express your concerns. You can cancel your procedure at any time, but be aware that your surgeon may charge a fee for canceling surgery within a certain time frame. If you are considering cancelling your surgery, you should ask your surgeon about cancellation fees.

Follow Pre-Operative Instructions

Your doctor will give you pre-operative instructions prior to your surgery. Be sure to follow these instructions carefully as not doing so may result in a reschedule of your surgery. If you are undergoing general anesthesia, do not eat or drink anything on the day of your surgery. Do not wear any make-up or put on perfume or cologne. Make sure you wash with the soap your doctor recommended. You may wish to pack a small bag with your medications, personal items, and an extra set of clothes.

When You Arrive

When you arrive at the surgical facility, you will be asked to change into a gown, surgical cap, and booties. You will then meet with your surgeon one last time, and he will usually mark your skin with a sterile marker. The nurse will then hook you up to an IV, check your vital signs, and prep you for anesthesia.

Anesthesia

Three different types of anesthesia are used during cosmetic procedures: general anesthesia, sedation anesthesia, and local anesthesia. General anesthesia induces a deep sleep. If you are undergoing general anesthesia, you will not remember anything about your surgery from the time anesthesia is implemented to the time you wake up. A breathing tube will be placed down your throat to assist you in breathing, and someone will monitor your anesthetic levels for the duration of the surgery. Sedation anesthesia induces drowsiness and relaxation. You may sleep during your surgery, or you may occasionally wake up, but either way you will feel at ease, even if you are susceptible to anxiety. It is administered through an IV, and you will not need a breathing tube. Sedation anesthesia is usually used in conjunction with local anesthesia. Local anesthesia induces numbness in a specific area of your body. It is injected by a needle, which may cause a small amount of discomfort or a burning sensation, which is quickly replaced by numbness.

Length of Surgery

The length of your surgery will be dependent on the procedure you are having, the surgical techniques being used, and the pace of the cosmetic surgeon. Every surgeon operates at his or her own pace. Your surgeon should tell you about how long your surgery will last, and you can then pass along this information to the person picking you up after surgery. In the unlikely event that a complication arises during surgery, the length of the surgery may be extended, and the medical staff will notify your contact person.

The Recovery Room

Following your surgery, you will be moved into a recovery room. This room is where you will wake up from anesthesia. A nurse will be by your side to attend to your needs and administer post-operative care. Once you have fully awoken, the nurse will check your vital signs to ensure you are doing well before sending you home. You should feel comfortable asking your recovery nurse any questions you may have about how the surgery went.

STEP 10: MAINTAIN YOUR RESULT

After your surgery, you will look worse before you look better. Because your body is healing from an invasive procedure, you will most likely experience significant swelling and bruising. These natural side effects usually last for one to three weeks, after which time, you should start to see improvement. However, you will not be able to evaluate the full extent of your aesthetic results until six months after the procedure. Your appearance may even continue to improve for up to a year following the surgery.

Post-operative Instructions

The first step in ensuring the best aesthetic result is to follow your surgeon's post-operative care instructions, which will include directions on how to care for your wounds, what medications and activities to avoid, and when you will be allowed to return to your normal routine. For some procedures, you will be asked to wear a compression garment, which will promote healing. Also, do not underestimate the positive effects of rest, elevation, and ice.

Exercise

Exercising too soon after surgery can result in pulled sutures and additional bleeding, swelling, bruising, or pain. Try not to overexert yourself while your body is healing. Be sure to ask your surgeon when it is safe to exercise. Once you receive the green light, exercise on a regular basis to increase your overall health and maintain your results.

Avoid Direct Sunlight

Some cosmetic procedures, such as laser resurfacing, require you to avoid direct sunlight and tanning beds for a period of time after surgery so your skin can heal properly. Also, scars, which are a reality of any surgery, can darken in direct sunlight. Wear sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 on all surgical sites for at least the first year following surgery. To maintain the best results, wear sunscreen every time you go out

into the sun. Prolonged exposure to the sun can create sun spots, damaged skin, and wrinkles.

Nutrition and Sleep

Eat a healthy diet. Drink plenty of water. Maintain a healthy body weight. And establish healthy sleeping habits. The health and overall appearance of your skin is greatly dependent on proper hydration, nutrition, and rest. Your body weight and shape is also directly affected by your diet and sleep habits. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables and avoid sweets. Try to get eight hours of sleep every night. Be sure to give your body the nutrients and rest it needs to function and look its best.

Take Care of Your Emotional Health

Avoid stress and stressful situations. Stress and anxiety can wear on your body, strain the muscles in your face, and diminish a youthful appearance. If you experience high levels of stress, anxiety, or depression, consider discussing them with a medical professional. Your emotional health is just as important as your physical health when it comes to maintaining your results.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to read this ebook. At Jensen Center for Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery, we want you to be an informed consumer! If you have any other questions, feel free to contact us at any time.

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