

Thinking about having cosmetic surgery?



Think carefully before having cosmetic surgery.

If you are thinking about having cosmetic surgery, here are some important questions that you should ask yourself to help you make the decision that is right for you.



What do I want to change and why do I want to have surgery?

What specifically do you want to change and why?

For example, if you want to have nose surgery, what exactly do you want to change about your nose? Why is it causing you an issue? Is it something that you have thought about for a long time, or has a specific event triggered you to want to have surgery?



Have I considered all the options?

Research the procedure you are considering.

There may be options that do not involve surgery that can give you the results you want. You can find more information about your procedure on our website.



Can surgery give me the results I want?

Be clear with yourself about what would make the procedure a success for you.

This is important because if you decide to go ahead, your surgeon can tell you if your expectations are realistic. Would you be content with a reasonable improvement, rather than perfection?



Am I expecting the surgery to change my life as well as my appearance?

Think about your quality of life and whether you think it will be improved as a result of surgery.

If you're feeling anxious about your relationships, social situations or work, changing your appearance might not be the answer.



How will I deal with any complications?

Any surgical procedure can have complications.

Consider how you would react if something did not go according to plan. Could you cope if there were complications or if you needed further surgery to change the initial result?



Can I afford the long-term costs of surgery?

What if the surgery needs to be repeated or corrected?

The procedure you are interested in may need to be repeated to maintain the results.

You may need regular scans afterwards to check everything is OK. If something does not go to plan you may need further surgery. Think of the overall cost of having surgery, including planned and possible costs, not just the initial procedure.



Is now the right time?

Cosmetic surgery is a big commitment. Is now the best time for you to have surgery?

Are there things happening in your life that would negatively affect your recovery?



Take time to think things through

Having surgery is a big decision.

Never feel rushed or pressured into giving your consent. Be wary of surgeons or staff who try to convince you to go ahead.

Take plenty of time to make your decision. We strongly advise you take at least two weeks after your consultation with the surgeon performing the procedure to think things through before surgery.

Use this space to write down any notes

Check it!

Checklist for your consultation with the surgeon.



Your surgeon and hospital

Meet the surgeon who will be performing your procedure.

Your costs

Find out about all the planned and possible costs...

...including costs of future surgery and complications. What happens if you change your mind after you have paid some or all of the costs?

Your procedure

Find out what the procedure will involve, the likely results, when you will see them and how long they will last.

Will surgery need to be repeated in the future? Where and when will the procedure take place and how long will it take? If you are thinking of having implants, check with the operating surgeon that they meet national safety guidelines. Find out if the implants will need to be replaced in the future.

Possible risks and complications of your procedure

Like any surgical procedure there are risks as well as benefits to weigh up.

Find out what could go wrong with the procedure you want, how likely it is to happen and what can be done to correct it. Ask your surgeon what the most common complications have been in their experience for this procedure, how often these have occurred and what the surgeon did to correct them. Consider how you would cope if anything went wrong.

Your aftercare

Find out what to expect after surgery including recovery time, how long the pain is likely to last and what you will and will not be able to do after surgery.

Find out what dressings and wound care will be needed after the procedure, who will do it and where it will be done. Ask what your aftercare package will and will not cover, how you will be looked after and how long the surgeon and hospital will continue to support you.

What will happen if something does not go to plan and who will pay? What will happen if something goes wrong immediately afterwards or if you are not happy with your outcome? Is there immediate access to care? The NHS is unlikely to help you, unless you have a serious complication which needs emergency or life-saving treatment.