



## *lip surgery*

*(lip augmentation/lip reduction)*

Attractive lips are a very important facial feature, and those who have abnormally thin or thick lips may feel self-conscious and embarrassed about their appearance. Today, cosmetic surgery has the means to bring about a change much wanted by a person. Reshaping may involve a surgical procedure or may be accomplished with injection therapy, depending on the desired results.



### *about lip surgery*

The best candidates for this type of procedure are women and men with lips of a size that causes them to feel uncomfortable about their look. Lips that droop or turn outwards can also create a lack of confidence and cause anxiety.



Lip surgery will provide a permanent, natural looking result and last the rest of your life.



### *your consultation*

Before you decide to go ahead with the procedure, your surgeon will offer you a thorough one-to-one medical consultation. You need to be open when communicating what exactly you would like to improve about your appearance. This will help your surgeon understand your expectations and determine whether they can realistically be achieved. It is important that you have a clear idea of how you would like to look and, at the same time, realise the limitations to the procedure.



### *preparing for surgery*

After a thorough examination and a full medical history, your surgeon will discuss with you various ways of correcting the problem.

Before your surgery:

- You should not take aspirin or anti-inflammatory medicines such as ibuprofen for 3 weeks before surgery.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages for 24 hours prior to surgery.
- Stop or reduce smoking for at least 2 weeks prior and after surgery.
- Do not wear any jewellery, contact lenses, makeup or nail polish.



## *your operation*

If you are having a lip reduction, your surgeon will make an incision the length of your lip inside your mouth and will remove a strip of skin from one or both lips. His aim is to enhance the mouth and lips area to complement your facial features and give you a softer, more natural mouth.

The incision is closed with a fine absorbable suture. Do not be alarmed by the size of your lips after the operation. This is due to the operative swelling that will obscure the results for several weeks. Even though there won't be an immediate change, patients can expect a significant improvement in a few weeks' time. Since the incisions are inside, scarring is minimal.

For the long upper lip, a lip lift operation is available that has flattering results for the properly selected patient. Your surgeon will perform an incision at the base of the nose right at the junction of the nose and the upper lip. Skin is removed beneath the nose resulting in elevation of the lip. The incision is closed with absorbable suture that will leave a fine scar after healing. Complications are uncommon with this operation but could include infection, wound separation or unsatisfactory scarring.

The one hour-long operation is usually carried under local or general anaesthesia and takes about two weeks to heal.

If you have thin lips and opted for a permanent lip enlargement, your surgeon will use your own skin tissue. The tissue is harvested from the dermis, the deeper layers of the skin that comes usually from some other operation where it would otherwise be discarded, such as abdominal reduction, breast reduction, or facelift. The epidermis or outer skin is removed and the shaped dermis threaded through from one side of the lip to the other. This tissue takes well as a graft because it is the patient's own tissue, decreasing the risk of allergy. An alternative graft to dermis is fascia, the covering of muscle.

Your surgeon will have told you during the consultation that lip enhancement by graft is limited by the amount of vermilion or mucosa of the lip that is available. This type of surgery is recommended for younger individuals with enough amounts of vermilion available.

In addition to the operations mentioned above, Dr. Eleftheriou also performs excision of lesions of the lip and reconstruction for skin tumors and treatment of actinic keratosis of the vermilion.



## *recovery*

- Take it easy and sleep on two or more pillows to keep your head elevated for 7-14 days.
- Remember that swelling and bruising is perfectly normal after surgery, but this will clear up in a few weeks. Expect to see the final results in about three months. Because of the swelling your lips may look larger after the procedure, but they will settle in time.
- Give yourself a week before getting back to your normal routine.
- Do not participate in contact sports for at least 6-8 weeks.

## *risks and complications*

Very few patients experience significant complications, but like all surgical procedures, risks do exist. Bleeding, infection, and swelling are a possibility with any surgery.

The complications associated with lip reduction surgery are infrequent. Every year, many people undergo successful lip reduction surgery, experience no major problems and are delighted with the results. Anyone considering surgery, however, should be aware of both the benefits and the risks. Your surgeon will discuss these with you during your consultation.