

The Gift of Love

The Best Gift is Helping Someone Feel Better About Herself

Though Sarah Shaw* never had any objections to the size and shape of her nose as a young girl, that changed when an accident as a young adult left her with a wider nose and a pronounced bump that were, well, as plain as the nose on her face. As an adult, Shaw decided to undergo rhinoplasty to restore her nose's original appearance. Unfortunately, the procedure actually made things worse—Shaw's nose took on a crooked appearance and a second surgery did little to improve the situation.



Although she tried to accept the results and move on, Shaw recalls, “I avoided photos, and I avoided looking at myself in the mirror because it really was a sad reminder of everything that had gone wrong.” She continued to refuse pictures, even after her first child, a little girl, was born. She worried that her newly acquired lack of self-image was now affecting her family. Shaw says she didn't want her daughter to grow up feeling her lack of esteem, so she decided to give plastic surgery one last try. This time, she would research before choosing her plastic surgeon.

“It was hard for me to open my heart and trust again,” she says, “to even consider doing something about it. I did a lot of research, and it became apparent that Dr. Silver was the doctor to go to for reconstructive plastic surgery.”

Dr. William Silver of Premier Image Cosmetic and Laser Surgery in Atlanta, who has 30 years of experience in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery and specializes in revision rhinoplasty, notes, “The nose is the most complex structure on the face. Once the surgery is performed and the healing takes place, there may be some relapse of the problem that [the patient] has had. There is something that you can do in most every case to make it better.”

Silver, who holds triple board certification in Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Otolaryngology and Cosmetic Surgery, is fellowship director of the largest regional plastic surgery society in the world, the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Surgeons from across the United States study the advanced techniques and artistic tools that Silver has cultured in his years of practice. “The most difficult of surgeries are those of the nose,” he shares. “I try to teach [other surgeons] the very intricate and complicated details needed for rhinoplasty and revision rhinoplasty. However, every rhinoplasty is unique and experience will be the real teacher.”

Silver shares that nearly half of the rhinoplasties he performs are revisions of the work of other surgeons who are not board certified by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. The problem is that the public is not educated on how to qualify and then choose a plastic surgeon for the procedure they are considering. Specialty Board Certification in the specific field of plastic surgery—body or facial—is paramount.

In general, there are two factors that necessitate revision surgery: one is if the nose itself becomes deformed externally, and the other is if problems develop with the nasal airway. Since Silver and his partner, Dr. Louis DeJoseph, are board certified in Otolaryngology as well as Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, they are attuned to both the functional and aesthetic aspects of the nose, lessening the need for revision procedures to correct breathing problems that can develop if the nose heals improperly after surgery.

“During Otolaryngology training, all you do is surgery on the face, so our knowledge of things such as nasal anatomy is incredible,” DeJoseph says. “We will do special things, such as increase the size of the inside of the nose that will keep the function of the nose along with the aesthetic appearance. I always tell my patients, ‘It's one thing to have a nose look a certain way, but what use is that if it doesn't work like a nose?’”

For Shaw, undergoing revision surgery at Premier Image Cosmetic and Laser Surgery was just what the doctor ordered. “I had my consultation with Dr. Silver, and he told me exactly what he felt he could do, and didn't make any big, flashy promises like the first guy,” Shaw asserts. “I felt like everybody was really genuinely interested in my outcome and hoping for me. It was a pretty difficult surgery, but I feel completely

normal again. My nose is completely reconstructed. I didn't realize all those years that I was holding a piece of me back. I feel like myself again; I actually have photos of me with my daughter. I just feel like I'm 100 percent present for her, and I couldn't be more pleased or more thankful."

**Actual name not used for reasons of privacy.*

Be Safe, Not Sorry!

While most people assume that the doctors performing plastic surgery receive extensive training in the field prior to picking up the scalpel, that's not always the case. "A physician can take a weekend course and get certification to perform liposuction or face-lifting procedures," says Dr. Michael Tolson, who has been board certified in plastic surgery for more than 15 years and performs body plastic surgery. "Qualify the doctor before even making an appointment."

If you are considering undergoing any type of cosmetic procedure, ask the following questions to find a surgeon with the experience and training necessary to deliver the desired results:

1. Is the surgeon board certified in a specific specialty field?
 - If you're considering a cosmetic procedure involving the face, ears, or neck, is the doctor double board certified by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and by the American Board of Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery?
 - For body procedures, such as liposuction or breast reduction, is the doctor board certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
2. How many times has the surgeon performed the procedure you are interested in?
3. How long has the doctor been practicing plastic surgery?
4. Does the doctor have privileges at several local hospitals?
5. Does the doctor perform the procedures in a fully accredited surgery center or hospital?
6. Does the doctor use board certified anesthesiologists? Do they stay with you during your procedure?
7. How safe and effective is the procedure you are inquiring about? Is there a better alternative?
8. If implants or injectables are used, are they FDA-approved?

Sally Crenshaw

For more information about Premier Image call 770-457-6303.