

Going under the knife?

Zeenia F Baria talks to experts about cosmetic treatments for the arms and legs

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If you thought that breast enhancements and face lifts were the only cosmetic treatments that were in demand, think again. Today plastic surgeries for arms and legs have become increasingly popular. Consultant plastic and cosmetic surgeon, Dr Milind S Wagh says that with the dawn of the 21st century, the demand for aesthetic and cosmetic surgery has grown immensely in urban and semi-urban India. "Today it isn't just limited to the rich and famous but also embraced enthusiastically by the rapidly burgeoning middle class. Therefore, the commonest procedures are the torso and the face. However, there is now an increasing demand for cosmetic procedures on the arms and legs. This is partly because many people have undergone primary modifications on the torso and are noticing other areas of their body, which now appear disproportionate with the body contouring already done. The commonly requested cosmetic surgery procedures are liposuction for reduction of excess fat accumulation in the arms and arm-lifts for tightening of flab-by skin."

"The arms are one of the areas (thighs, tummy, hips, buttocks are others), which are resistant to fat loss even after exercise.

Liposuction is an excellent procedure for reshaping the arms and removing excess fat in those patients who are relatively young (up to their mid-50s) because the presence of good skin elasticity. This is done through tiny incisions in the armpits and behind the elbow and is a one day procedure in most cases," says Dr Wagh.

A large number of patients also undergo liposuction on the thighs for excess skin removal. Common procedures in the legs are calf reduction by liposuction and calf augmentation by implants to increase the bulk. According to Dr Wagh, while most patients requesting calf liposuction to reshape calves are women, the converse is true for calf implants, which are requested mostly by men. "Calf liposuction is done through tiny incisions behind the knee and is very effective in reshaping the calves to a patient's satisfaction. This procedure also requires just a day and one can usually go back to work the next day. A snug elasticated stockinette is to be worn for four to six weeks. Any swelling of the feet is fleeting and is related to the tight stockinette rather than the procedure. Calf augmentation is done using solid silicon gel calf implants, which are placed in a dissected pocket between the skin and the muscles through a small horizontal incision behind the knee. They increase the bulk of the calves and give them a more masculine athletic appearance. Present generation calf



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CUT THE FLAB: Unwanted weight from the arms and legs can be removed easily with cosmetic surgery

implants are quite safe and durable. After resting for three to five days, one can go back to their daily activities, he says."

Aesthetic and laser surgeon, Dr Lakshyajit Dhami says that after the face, the arms and legs are the next most exposed areas of the body. "Any woman who wants to look her best will want to have perfectly shaped arms and legs since they go a long way in enhancing a person's personality. Indian women mostly wear

sarees and the outfit requires sculpted and shaped arms. A simple surgical procedure of liposuction can give the perfect arm-size without any over-hanging skin or fatty bulge. More often than not it is the medial or inside arm, which needs to be worked upon. The results of this procedure are almost immediately evident but it may take anything from three weeks to three months for the total sculpting effect to be visible. Like any surgical treatment, the patient should be medically fit for the procedure. The additional benefit of early recovery can be derived with the use of lycra made pressure garments, which can be easily worn under any clothing and not a hindrance to daily activities. Patients who are unhappy with their hand skin, which gives away their age can opt for fractional laser resurfacing. This painless procedure requires five to six sittings and is done on an out-patient basis and takes about 15-20 minutes to carry out without any downtime. The patient can resume normal activities immediately. Fractional resurfacing is the latest modality for rejuvenating skin from any part of the body and helps in reducing facial scars, wrinkles and skin blemishes. It also works well for stretch marks on the stomach, arms, thighs and legs," says Dr Dhami.

Patients who've undergone severe weight loss or post-bariatric surgery, might have sagging hip or thigh skin and may require thigh and buttocks lift. These are usually carried out together with Abdominoplasty procedures and provide remarkable

body figure re-contouring. According to Dr Dhami, "A patient who may have flat buttock's and desires augmentation can be operated upon for buttocks silicone implants. The scar is hidden between hip's cleft. Leg veins, which in its sub group includes varicose veins, reticular veins or thread veins can also be easily tackled with the help of laser."