



Nicholas Lee
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon
nicholaslee.surgery

FACIAL IMPLANTS

Information for patients



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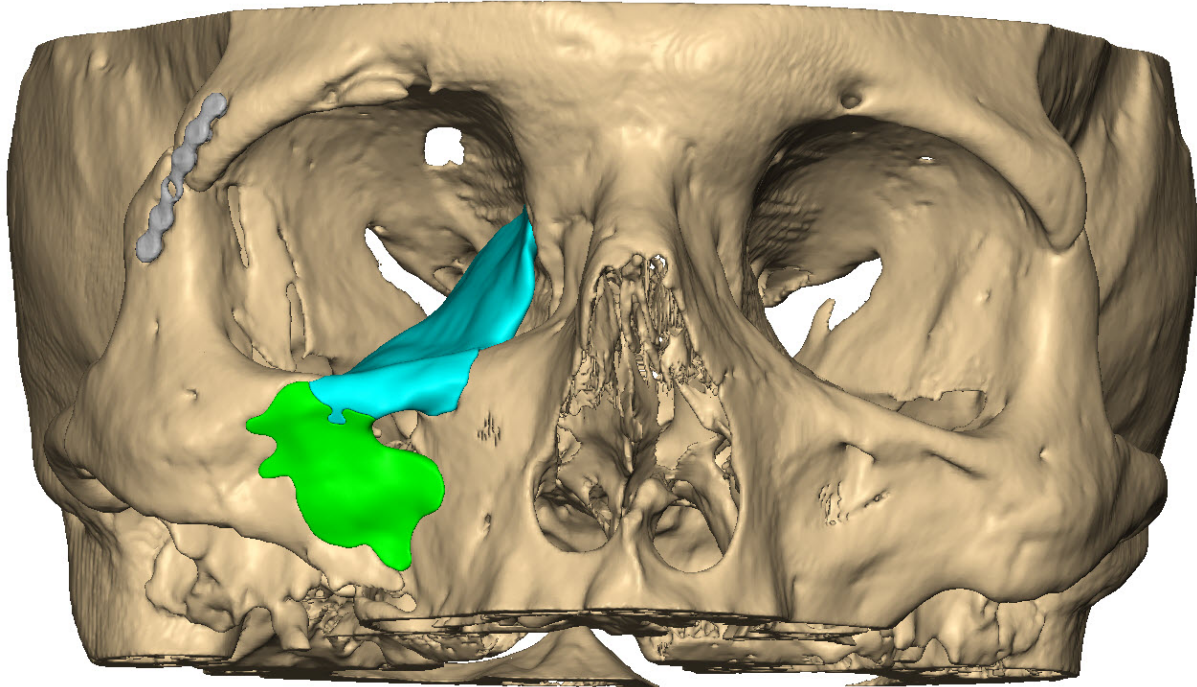


Figure 1: 3D skull showing implant reconstruction using a right orbital floor and cheek.

This leaflet is designed to help you understand what is involved in having a facial implant. It explains some of the common side effects and complications associated with the procedure that you may need to be aware of.

It is not meant to replace discussion between you and your surgical team, but it may help to answer some of your queries. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

What are Facial Implants?

Facial implants are custom made implants used to reconstruct the face and usually made from Medpor or from PEEK (Polyethetherketone) or titanium. All materials have been commonly and successfully used in surgery for many years. Custom made implants are made following a CT scan of the bony structures of your face and are bespoke and personal to you.

Why is this operation (surgery) needed?

We only perform this type of surgery if the implant is appropriate for you and you would like to undergo treatment.

Facial implants have been used for people who have an under-development of the mid part of the face with an overall flatter appearance.

They can also be used for facial rejuvenation. As we get older the tissues of the midface tend to lose the youthful experience that we once had and a small cheek zygoma implant can restore the fullness of the cheek bone that we had when we were younger.

If you have sustained previous trauma to your cheekbone (zygoma), then a facial implant can be helpful in reconstructing the face reducing flatness and improving your overall symmetry.

If you have a congenital asymmetry of the face, implants of the cheek (zygoma) and mandible can also be used to help restore and improve the symmetry.

Planning prior to surgery?

When you are ready for your operation, you will be seen on a planning clinic with your team to discuss with you your expectations and proposed desires. Planning continues with the production of your facial implant which we fit onto the bones of your face. To make these facial implants, we require a CBCT scan. A CBCT scan is a low dose x-ray examination which produces a very precise 3D image of the bones of your face.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is usually carried out inside the mouth so that there are no external scars.

The placement of the facial implants are generally placed under general anaesthetic, sometimes they can be performed under local anaesthesia with or without sedation.

A) Lower Jaw Implants (mandibular patient specific implants).

During this surgery a small incision is made in the mouth adjacent to the lower back teeth and the implants are placed directly onto the jaw and secured with two to three small titanium screws to prevent any movement of the implants following placement and the wounds are closed with dissolving stitches.

B) Chin Implant.

Chin implants are placed by an incision made from inside the mouth or from an incision made directly under the chin. The chin implant is usually placed adjacent to the chin point before being fixed in position with very small titanium screws and then the wound is closed using sutures in the mouth and / or under the chin.

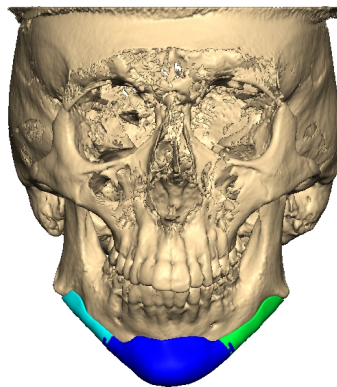


Figure 2: A 3D skull showing implants reconstructing the lower jaw.

C) Cheek Bone Implants (zygoma patient specific implants)

A small incision is made in the mouth above the upper teeth and these implants are placed directly onto the cheek bone and screwed into the bone with small titanium screws to prevent any movement of the implants following placement. The wound in the mouth is closed with dissolving stitches.

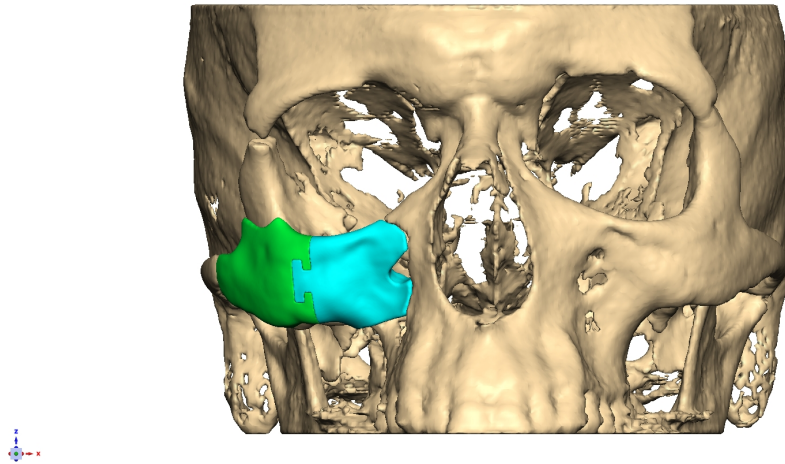


Figure 3: 3D skull showing implant reconstruction of the right cheek (zygoma).

What are the complications associated with this procedure?

Complications with this type of surgery are fortunately rare and may not apply to you, but it is important that you are aware of them. The most commonly reported ones are numbness and altered sensation of the upper teeth, upper lip and cheek. If a mandibular (lower jaw and chin) implant is placed there is the risk of numbness to the lower lip and chin. If a mandibular or chin implant is placed, we would hope that any altered sensation would be temporary, but there is a risk that it could be permanent.

Initially following the surgery, you will expect to have some soreness, swelling and tightness, but this will settle with time.

Other complications include bleeding, infection, facial asymmetry and numbness which is usually temporary and can take a few weeks to settle.

Implant infection may mean that the implant needs removal and if this occurs, then we would need to wait until the tissues have totally healed before another implant could be considered.

It may also be possible to feel the edges of the implant under the skin if you have thin skin.

With all facial implants, there is also the risk of dissatisfaction with the appearance after the surgery.

Your surgeon will discuss your individual risks.

What are the risks of having a general anaesthetic?

This type of treatment is not compulsory or life saving for any patient and whilst there is a very small risk of not waking up after a general anaesthetic, so this must be balanced with how much your face is a concern to you and whether an operation can improve your overall facial balance.

Straight after a general anaesthetic, you may feel tired, dizzy or weak. You must have someone to collect you and stay with you for the first 24 hours. During the first 24 hours, you must not drive or operate any motorised vehicle and electrical equipment, sign any legal documents or make any important decisions, or drink any alcohol. You may feel weak or dizzy at times during your first 7 – 10 days. If this happens, sit down until the feeling passes. You may also have the postoperative “blues”, though this should soon pass.

How long will I be in hospital?

This depends on the individual, but most patients stay in. Some implants can be placed as a day stay procedure, but most patients stay in hospital for one night after surgery. People vary in their speed of recovery, but you should expect seven to ten days off work following the surgery and you should avoid any strenuous sports for four to six months. Gentle exercise can be resumed at three to four weeks after surgery and we would aim to see you back on our clinic for a follow up appointment one week, three months and then six months after your surgery. There will be some gentle settling of the soft tissues before the final results of the surgery become apparent.

Can I eat normally after surgery?

For the first few days you will be asked to keep to a soft diet to aid healing after surgery. Chewing can also be more painful and sore if chewing hard foods.

Can I brush my teeth?

It is important that you keep your mouth as clean as possible for the first few weeks after surgery to prevent infection. It will be sore and you may find it difficult to clean your teeth around the stitches. Try using a soft small headed toothbrush, such as a child's toothbrush.

Starting the day after your surgery, gently rinse your mouth out with a mouthwash of warm salty water (dissolve a flat teaspoon of table salt in a cup of warm water) three times a day for five to seven days to keep it free from any food remains. We will give you a mouthwash to start using in hospital and to take home with you. Please note that mouth washing does not replace brushing your teeth.

You will also be given a short course of oral antibiotics to be taken following the surgery and the course should be completed.

It is important that you **do not smoke** as this will make it more likely that you develop an infection. If you would like advice on how to stop smoking, please speak to a nurse or your GP.


If you require more information about stopping smoking, please ask a member of staff before your procedure. To help with giving up smoking, call the NHS Stop Smoking Helpline on 0800 0224332 or go to www.smokefree.nhs.uk.


'What do I need to look out for when I go home?'

You will be swollen where you have had your surgery. Pain and discomfort should be controlled with regular analgesia. Some temporary numbness of your face is common. Please contact your team urgently if the implant is visible in the mouth or any signs of infection (high temperature, redness and discharge)

Who can I contact with questions or concerns?

You can contact the clinic on;

 BMI Thornbury : 01142661133

 High Trees : 01143493326

 Occidental : 0114 2780110

or email us on maxfac.njl@icloud.com