

Too Old for a Nose Job?

Your nose is getting longer, it's no lie

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You've never considered nose job surgery before, but...

You know those classic images of witches – long nose, long chin, hair sprouting from moles, green skin? Think the Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz*. Well, there a reason for that.

The exaggerated characteristics have an authentic root: Your nose and your chin do keep growing after everything else has stopped. The hair sprouting out of moles is another issue, and I really can't explain the green skin, but the nose thing is true.

New York City facial plastic surgeon, [Sam Rizk](#), MD, FACS, who specializes in rhinoplasty actually sees a lot of clients

come in in their middle years — so much so that he specifically addresses the issues of the aging nose with his procedure.

More and more people above the age of 40 are coming in, concerned about the changes in their nose," he says.

They "feel weird" they tell him, because they can't quite pinpoint what's wrong, but something looks different:

They say "I feel like my nose is getting bigger, and I never had a bump before."

The "witch" nose, Dr. Rizk explains, "is really a pseudo bump" and it comes from gravity pulling the nose down. There's also often a thickening of the skin on the nose, he adds, which contributes to its larger appearance.

People who started out with small noses might actually benefit from the aging process, developing a more distinguished-looking aquiline nose. But for those who've been bothered by their nose, this can explain why it seems to be even more bothersome now.

The Droop

Rhinoplasty in older patients primarily involves restoring the tip to its more youthful position. It's a different procedure than the traditional nose job, Dr. Rizk explains. For instance, there's *no* breaking of the nasal bones. Dr. Rizk only uses cartilage grafts, which allows for a very short recovery time, often less than a week.

How Technology Has Changed the Game

The Nose Visualizer: it sounds like something Jon Stewart might make up, but it's a great pre-op assessment, say Dr. Rizk, to make sure the doctor and patient are on the same page as to what is desired and what can be achieved.

3-D, Hi-Def: This is something Dr. Rizk pioneered – a telescopic H-D camera *inside* the nose during the procedure that allows him to

1. see the nose internally
2. avoid blood vessels — interference with them is what causes swelling & bruising
3. more accurately shape the nose during surgery.

This technology is what allows for recovery in about 5 days, since there is minimal swelling & bruising. That's also, Dr. Rizk says, what was often responsible for the scoop nose seen in traditional nose jobs. The swelling meant you couldn't see the shape, which led to overcompensation — too much taken off the bridge of the nose.

Plus the work is so subtle and precise – just like people couldn't tell what had "gone wrong" with their nose, it's difficult to tell the difference, except that you look rested, refreshed, younger.

Although so many people come in asking about their nose, Dr. Rizk says a rhinoplasty on older clients often ends up being performed in conjunction with a facelift, necklift or eyelid surgery to optimize the time and money being spent. Particularly if the concerns are related to divorce or job-seeking.

The Breath

I was surprised to learn that breathing is a major factor for mid-lifers who opt for a nose job.

DO this test: Push upward on the tip of your nose to see if you breathe easier... if so, you might want to check into this.

Now, I'm going to look into the green skin situation...