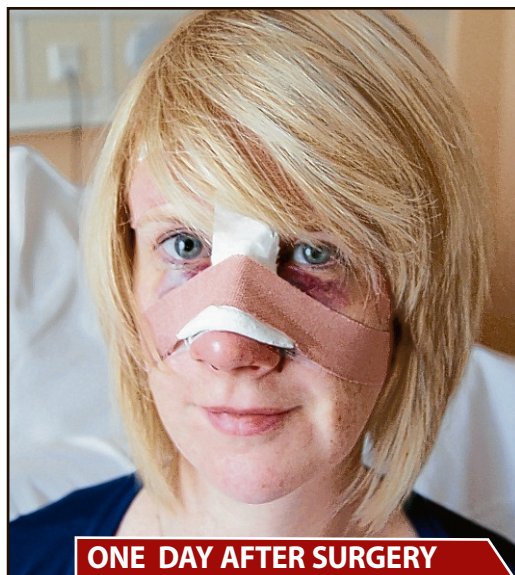




ONE HOUR AFTER SURGERY



ONE DAY AFTER SURGERY



TWO DAYS AFTER SURGERY

New profile is worth all the pain

WHEN prominent noses were being given out, I was near the front of the queue.

Slap-bang in the middle of my face, my protruding nose has made me the brunt of many a joke, earned me the nickname Steffi (after tennis player Steffi Graf), and lowered my self-confidence.

After several years of toying with the idea, I decided to look seriously into the possibility of permanently altering the feature that had made me unhappy and low in self-esteem for so long.

After consultations with two surgeons in 2006 and 2007, I finally took the plunge and had surgery in 2010.

I write about numerous women who have gone under the knife in a bid to change the body bits they are unhappiest with. From boob jobs to Botox and eye-bag removal to liposuction, I have covered it.

Each time, these women talk about the positive impact a tweak here and a tuck there has had on them physically and emotionally. Now it was my turn to find out first-hand about the pros and cons of cosmetic surgery.

I opted for a £3800 nose job with one of Scotland's top plastic surgeons, Taimur Shoaib, who has recently launched Glasgow's cosmetic surgery clinic La Belle Forme. Research assured me that I would be in very good hands.

The British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons said he carries out between 20 and 30 rhinoplasties each year and, as well as cosmetic surgery, is a skilled reconstructive surgeon.

Following a one-to-one with Mr Shoaib, my quest for the "perfect nose" had begun.

He agreed that my "protruding" nose "did not fit my face".

Like any good surgeon, Mr Shoaib also questioned my reasons for wanting the complex and painful procedure.

The decision on cosmetic surgery, to permanently alter your appearance, is not to be taken lightly. It requires a great deal of consideration, taking the pros and the cons into account.

Yes, the chances are you will feel happier, more confident, and almost like a new person in the long-term but that's after enduring several hours of surgery, several days of bruising and several months of swelling, not to mention the post-op pain and discomfort.

He also warned that it would look worse before it looked better, that I would have packing up my nose for one day, that I'd wear a splint for a week and feel bunged up for several days.

He also explained it would leave me

Writer **LAURA COVENTRY**'s nose had affected her self-confidence for years. Here's her own story of finally going for plastic surgery

with tiny 2mm scars on each side of the nose.

Soon, the letter arrived through my front door with my date for surgery at Scotland's biggest plastic surgery unit, the Nuffield Hospital in Glasgow's west end. August 20 was operation day.

Every nose is different, so taking a photograph of your favourite "celebrity nose" into your initial consultation is not advisable.

Mr Shoaib told me: "You can have a Jennifer Aniston haircut but you can't have a Jennifer Aniston nose."

All I want is a nose that I don't hate.

AUGUST 20: OPERATION DAY

BY now I thought the nerves would kick in but I am feeling excited, not nervous or apprehensive, and no second thoughts enter my head.

This is not how I expected I'd feel. Surely this isn't normal? I am certain this operation is going ahead and convinced I am doing the right thing as I sign my consent forms. I meet surgeon Mr Shoaib, who takes "before" photographs, then anaesthetist Mr Tom McCubbin introduces himself.

Even as I am wheeled down at 2.30pm and enter the lift that states "theatre use only", I am relatively calm.

When I come round in recovery, I am a bit disorientated and tearful. After being wheeled back to my room, I rest on oxygen. I feel no pain whatsoever but am well aware of my new nose, which is covered with a splint made

from plaster of Paris. Blocked and unable to breathe through my nose, I look in a mirror and notice a horrific black eye beginning to appear. Gradually, each eye begins to swell.

The nurses pop into my room to ask how I am feeling. I feel a little nauseous and am unable to eat that night.

My first visitors arrive at 7.45pm. After receiving lots of texts from well-wishers, I feel a little guilty, as I am not actually ill.

My family are surprised to see me sitting up and chatting. Afterwards, Mr Shoaib pops in to see how I am. He reassures me by saying he is "pleased with how it went". He also says he'd given me the nose "I was meant to have" but explains it could be several months before it looks normal.

I struggle to sleep that night, not only because I am sitting up, but because I am told I will have the packing removed early the next morning.

AUGUST 21: DAY AFTER OPERATION

WAKE at 6.45am. Nurses ask if I am in any pain. Amazingly, I am not and need no painkillers. I am told I have a high pain threshold but I am dreading the next stage.

While keen to have two two nasal swabs removed from each nostril, I am well aware the extraction is rather unpleasant.

Still restricted by the splint, which is not removed for seven days, I eat breakfast but can't wash my face or blow my

nose. Blood is still trickling down each nostril and I have to regularly wipe it. Once I've filled in a survey and had my painkillers prescribed, I am ready to be discharged.

AUGUST 23: THREE DAYS LATER

FEELING a little fragile still after my experience, I am still blocked up and unable to smile because of the swelling and splint across my face. I want to smile because I am happy and have no real pain. The facial bruising is less severe and is now yellow in colour.

AUGUST 27: ONE WEEK ON

TODAY, I venture out in public - complete with plaster cast across my face - for the first time since my operation. As I pop into a shopping centre before going to the Nuffield Hospital to have my plaster cast and stitches removed, I am conscious of everyone staring.

Sitting in the waiting room at the Nuffield, I am nervous and excited. My appointment is at 2.30pm - exactly one week ago to the hour since I was wheeled down for my surgery. Up until now the whole experience has been positive and I am hoping this will continue.

Will my new nose be everything I hoped it would be? First, the nurse removes the sticky tape which held the splint to my face - this is 10 times worse

than having a Band-Aid removed. Next, she prises the plaster cast from the nose. This is the most pain I've felt - and even worse than the sensation when the packing was removed.

I shriek as Janice peels it off - it feels as if she is taking my new nose off with the plaster cast.

Then two sutures are removed before the nurse passes me a mirror. I am amazed at the reflection staring back at me. Gone is the crookedness and witch-like bump, replaced with a neat, straight bridge (with some post-op scarring). Next I head to La Belle Forme (the cosmetic surgery clinic run by my surgeon) where I am having a make-up consultation with Jacqui Young.

The beauty specialist applies camouflage make-up to conceal remaining bruising and scars. I am now ready to face the public.

AUGUST 30: BACK TO WORK

"YOU look different," a colleague says to me. "Have you had a haircut?" When I tell her, and others, that the change in my appearance is actually my nose, no one can believe me. It's just 10 days since my op but it looks like I have never even had surgery. The bruising has disappeared (I put that down to taking arnica pills every few hours) and, with Jacqui Young's tips, I have been able to conceal the scars.

OCT 22: CHECK-UP WITH SURGEON

FEELING great and very happy with my new nose, I bound into the Nuffield Hospital to meet Mr Shoaib for my post-surgery check-up. It's been two months since my surgery and the tip of my nose is still numb (this is normal). Over the past few weeks, I have noticed subtle changes in the shape of my nose (also normal). I tell my surgeon I had quite high expectations but wasn't expecting perfection, before telling him "he wasn't far off it". Mr Shoaib then takes "after" photographs before showing me the comparison. I am shocked. I cannot believe I'd walked around with my old nose for 32 years.

MY surgery was carried out by Taimur Shoaib, of Glasgow-based cosmetic surgery clinic La Belle Forme, Wilson Street, Glasgow, at the Nuffield Hospital, Glasgow.

● For more information visit www.labelleforme.co.uk

labelleforme.co.uk or call 0141 552 0828 and for the Nuffield Hospital Glasgow contact **0141 334 9441** or visit www.nuffieldhealth.com

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