

Cheek and Chin Procedures

A [full facelift](#) is one of the best ways to turn back the clock and take off years from your appearance. But if you want to focus on enhancing your cheeks and chin, you have several options instead of (or in addition to) the benefits that a facelift can offer. Approaches to chin and cheek enhancement have evolved, as new, longer-lasting fillers and [surgical implants](#) become available.

As you age, your facial fat and tissues tend to “deflate,” leaving you looking saggy. Cheek augmentation is often supplemented with [dermal fillers](#), which can be performed in the office and require little to no downtime. Even temporary fillers can produce results that last for years. For moderate contouring, consider [facial liposuction](#) to remove fatty tissue deposits. In some cases, your surgeon may even be able to inject your processed fat back into the areas around your chin and cheeks to create volume. Cheek implants are your best option for permanent augmentation of your cheeks and mid-face. These can be made of silicone (which integrates less completely with the anchoring bone and tissue), polyethylene or expanded polytetrafluoroethylene (ePTFE).

There are three general ways to get the cheekbones you’ve always wanted:

- Malar implants are placed directly on top of your natural cheekbones, resulting in a dramatic high contour. These are the most common choice for cheek enhancement.
- Submalar implants, as you might guess, are placed slightly below your cheekbones. These are best for balancing out a “sunken” facial appearance.
- Combined malar/submalar implants are sometimes recommended to enhance the entire cheek area.

Cheek implants are usually placed using an incision in the upper mouth, near the top of your gumline; there is a slightly elevated risk of infection with this method, so your plastic surgeon may prescribe an antibiotic as part of your post-surgery treatment regimen. Another method that involves an external incision near the eye, though this creates a visible scar.

Chin augmentation can also be performed using injectable fillers, implants or a combination of both. If your goal is to fill in lines and “hollows” in your chin and jawline, injectable fillers can accomplish this in a single office visit. But if you want a more dramatic correcting of a weak or receding chin, the best (and longest-lasting) solution is a surgical implant. These are solid silicone placed through a small incision in the natural crease under your chin, where scarring will not be apparent.

Both cheek and chin implant surgery require general anesthesia or intravenous sedation, and can usually be completed within two hours. Most patients are sufficiently recovered within two weeks to return to their daily routine. While the risks are minimal, your plastic surgeon will check his or her work during your follow-up appointment(s) in order to make sure the implants have not become displaced or asymmetrical. If revision surgery is necessary, it’s better to have it done sooner rather than later, since non-silicone implants will continue to integrate with the underlying tissue and bone, making them more difficult to remove later. Keep this in mind when discussing implant types with your plastic surgeon.