

LIP REDUCTION PLASTY: A CASE REPORT AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract: -

Lip reduction is a plastic surgery procedure that enhances facial appearance by reducing the volume of lower, upper or both lips. This procedure finds its usefulness in the present-day lip reduction plasty as a form of cosmetic surgery. We present a 28-year-old female who complained of broad lips with a portion of red (wet) vermilion exposed when the mouth was closed. We present this rare aesthetic surgical procedure in our hospital and also a search of relevant literature. Level of Evidence: level IV

Keywords: *Lip reduction, vermillionectomy, lip reduction, lip plasty and reduction cheiloplasty*



INTRODUCTION

The mouth is in direct field of vision, particularly while communicating. Even the smallest asymmetry, volume deficit or wrinkles are highly visible. Full, plump lips are often considered a desirable trait but some individuals find theirs abnormally large. Lip size interrupts the balance of the facial features. When lips are larger than average, this can interfere with eating and speaking as well as attract unwanted attention, causing patients to be self-conscious. The upper lip and area around the mouth heavily influenced our perceived age.¹

Lip reduction can be performed to address a number of concerns, including thick lip caused by genetics, revision of a previous lip augmentation and correction of a congenital defect, excess tissue following recovery from an injury or undue exposure of the wet vermilion². Attempt to correct these defects, medical history was taken and what one hoped to achieve with surgery to create a personalized plan for this surgery would be realized.

CASE REPORT:

A 28- year- old female presented in our facility with the history of broad lips and exposed portion of the wet vermilion of the lower lip. She felt the lips had raised attention of her onlookers as well as aesthetic concern to her [fig. 1]. She requested for lip reduction surgery having seen such procedure on the internet. Her medical history was taken and she was examined. The challenges of lip plasty were mentioned and she gave a written consent for the surgery. She had her baseline investigations done and was found to be satisfactory. At surgery, under general anaesthesia, an elliptical excision of the wet vermilion was made, excising the mucosal tissue and sutured with absorbable vicryl 3/0 [Fig. 2]. This helps to take away the portion of the red vermilion. Postoperatively, the wet vermilion was no longer exposed and the lower lip was raised and narrowed [fig.3]. She was very happy and appreciated the team members. Postoperative condition was uneventful. She recovered fully in two weeks and went to her work of broadcasting.

DISCUSSION:

Vermilionectomy was rarely performed in the 19th century. Red lip resection and reconstruction was just not considered as being worth mentioning. Blasius stated this in 1848 criticizing the Von Bruns technique in a report even before Von Bruns had published this technique in his atlas.³

There are some medical conditions that cause drooling, poor speech, labial incompetence or other challenges, like low self esteem and social anxiety that a lip reduction can help to improve.[4] According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, overly large lips could also result from dentofacial deformities, generalized thickening of all tissues, lymphomatous infiltration, inflammatory infiltration, glandular hypertrophy, hemangiomas, infection and trauma⁵.

In many cases, a lip reduction procedure can help to normalize or restore proper oral function.⁶ This is especially helpful for those whose lips do not seal adequately and thereby cause drooling, poor speech or other challenges.⁷ However, the index patient presented with broad lower lip with exposed part of the wet vermilion. This brought aesthetic concern to her as she was abused by the elder sister.

The question to address now is: What does the patient stand to achieve following lip plasty? This helps to remove excess tissue that cause lip deformity and also enhances facial harmony by balancing the upper and lower lips. No visible scar and the recovery time is very short.⁸

The best candidates for a lip reduction plasty are those who are in general good health, have realistic expectations of their outcome and wish to decrease their lip size.⁷ Such patient should not be a smoker nor suffer from mental illness and should have stable body weight.

Different procedures have been advocated for lip plasty which could be surgical and non-surgical. Lip reduction surgery involves removing skin tissues from the lower or upper lips or sometimes both. This is done to reshape the entire lip area¹. In the procedure, the surgeons used a general anaesthesia and incision was made in a horizontal line in the pink (wet) inner portion of the lower lip which minimized scarring. The mucosa of the wet vermilion was excised in elliptical shape which reduced its overall shape and volume. In some procedures where the bulk of the lower lip is of concern, the tissue is excised accordingly. After removing the targeted tissue, the incision is closed with absorbable sutures. The sutures usually fall off within few days.

Another lip reduction procedure is the Brazilian reduction which focuses on slimming down only one of the lips.⁸ This procedure focuses on the shape of the lower lip, taking inspiration from the Bikini line which is traditionally more triangular shape at the bottom to achieve the desired shape and volume reduction. The surgeon removes a greater portion from the center of the lower lip.

Lip reduction is not free from complications. Common complications are infection, scarring, severe swelling, bleeding and allergic reaction to anaesthesia.⁶ Postoperatively, application of cold packs may occur. Patient is placed on analgesic such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Antibiotics are rarely needed. Patient resumed duty on 8th day post surgery.

CONCLUSION:

Lip reduction surgery helps to enhance the overall facial appearance by bringing balance to the upper and lower lips. A strong understanding of the anatomical and aesthetic shades of the lips will allow for enhancement of conventional reconstructive or cosmetic procedures to optimize functional and aesthetic outcomes. This is a rare procedure in our institution which needs to be encouraged.

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