

SPLURGE

## Botox, boob jobs and facelifts are topping many holiday wish lists

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Nicole Lyn Pesce

Plastic surgeons are enjoying a December bump in business as more men and women get work done during their time off.

It's the most wonderful time of the year for plastic surgeons.

Several doctors told Moneyish that patients have been lining up to get work done now that many of them are done working ahead of Christmas and New Year's.

"It's crazy – I'm going from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.," Dr. Melissa Doft, who runs a Park Avenue plastic surgery practice in Manhattan, told Moneyish. "We're doing four times as many as procedures, starting from late October through the end of the year."

She credits the holiday rush on a few different factors: Students who have a few weeks off between semesters to allow nose jobs (around \$15,000) and breast reductions (around \$4,000 to \$17,000) to heal; men and women in their 40s and 50s getting facelifts (up to \$25,000), liposuction (around \$2,000) and tummy tucks (around \$15,000) done while they're out of the office – and ahead of the summer wedding season; as well as the hibernating nature of winter weather, when people can hide their bruises under layers, and they're naturally staying out of the sun, which lead to worse scarring or pigmentation after surgery or fillers (\$800 to \$1,500). Plus, if a procedure (like a breast reduction) is covered by insurance because it treats a medical condition, many patients who've met their 2017 deductibles are racing to get their "free" surgeries done before everything resets in the New Year.

Upper East Side surgeon [Dr. Elie Levine](#) also noted that he gets a lot of "mommy makeovers" this time of year (typically breast lifts and tummy tucks) because, "their partners may also be off work and around more to help out with the children while they are recovering."

And many like Christine Poli, 53, from Manhattan are getting in the holiday spirit and treating themselves. Dr. Doft performed a breast reduction on her (from a 38DD to a 36B) last week to ease her back pain and to feel more comfortable during workouts. But Poli also opted to add on a little lipo around her stomach and some face contouring through fillers.

"I have two kids in their mid- to late-20s that I'm putting through school, and I decided that this was a holiday gift for me," Poli, a personal assistant, told Moneyish. "I could care less about getting jewelry. I want to defy the aging process. This is the best gift because I am going to enjoy this for years to come. I feel incredible."

Carolina, who asked to withhold her last name, put off getting her long-awaited breast augmentation with Beverly Hills cosmetic surgeon Dr. Rady Rahban for several months until December brought her year-end bonus and the time off that she needed to cover the surgery and recovery period.

“This is one of the best things I’ve ever done. I’m super, super happy,” the 27-year-old designer told Moneyish. “It’s definitely given me more confidence, and I like myself more everytime I look in the mirror. I’m going to visit my family in Spain for New Year’s, and I am definitely going to enjoy shopping for the trip more now.”

Plastic surgery is big business year-round. People spent more than \$16 billion on 17.1 million cosmetic procedures last year – a 3% increase on the number of jabs, lifts and tucks over the year before, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

And it’s become an increasingly popular gift. More than a quarter (27%) of surveyed women – and even 1 in 5 men – said they would want to receive a cosmetic plastic surgery procedure as a present this year. And the procedures gifted most often are liposuction (17%), tummy tucks (11%), facelifts (11%) and Botox/fillers (11%), in line with what surgeons told Moneyish they are seeing on their patients’ holiday wish lists.

“It’s like our normal practice but on steroids,” said Dr. Rahban, likening the December surge to “tax season for a CPA.”

But if you’re considering giving someone the gift of lipo or Botox, keep these tips from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons in mind:

- Don’t suggest a procedure that the recipient has never mentioned. (Or else brace yourself for, “So you’re saying I look old/fat/ugly?”)
- Never secretly arrange surgery for someone else. Your loved one must have a consultation with the board-certified plastic surgeon of her or his choice. So present them with a consult, plus a promise to pay for the procedure if both the patient and surgeon agree it is appropriate.
- If you really want to have a present ready, pre-paying for a treatment your loved one gets regularly, like Botox injections or a chemical peel, can be a great choice.
- The gift of plastic surgery doesn’t end with surgery. You also need to be a great caregiver – both physically and emotionally – during the recovery period, which can take weeks or sometimes months.