



I had hated my nose for a long time—its size overshadowed the rest of my petite features. A little over a year ago, I finally decided to do something about it.

After a lot of effort researching both the rhinoplasty procedure and meeting various doctors, I decided to go to Dr. Richard Rival, MD., FRCSC, an otolaryngologist (he specializes in facial plastic surgery) with offices in Toronto and Newmarket, Ont. From our first meeting I got a great feeling about him. Unlike some doctors I had met with, he showed me a portfolio with examples of his work. He also spent time assessing my nose and asking what I wanted from the procedure instead of just telling me his opinion.

“You want to make sure your surgeon is someone who listens and takes your concerns seriously,” he explained to me. That was exactly what I wanted. He also advised me to bring in photos of celebrities I wanted to resemble. “These are helpful for me, or any surgeon, to get a sense of esthetic preferences of the patient,” he said. I brought some photos of rhinoplasty patients whose results I liked and who had noses similar to mine before the surgery.

Dr. Rival encouraged me to ask him questions before choosing him – or any other surgeon – to perform the procedure. I learned to ask about the doctor’s experience, how he or she planned to address my specific concerns and risks. “Your surgeon should be open to discussing these with you, along with his personal experience with these kinds of complications,” said Dr. Rival.

On the day of the surgery, I was so nervous I arrived at the hospital two hours early. Waiting only made my nerves worse. But Dr. Rival was very reassuring.

Due to my deviated septum, I knew my procedure would take longer than normal (a typical rhinoplasty procedure

MY STORY

On the nose

How my perseverance landed me the perfect surgeon for the job and the perfect nose for me.

BY MARIE MCKAY, AS TOLD TO DAYNA BOYER

takes about 90 minutes). My surgery took four hours, which Dr. Rival said was not unusual for difficult cases like mine.

When I woke up from the general anesthetic, I felt as if I had been hit in the face, which was expected since the shape of my nose had changed drastically. Now all I had to do was heal. I was thankful I had my family for support.

“The worst part of the recovery is usually the internal swelling, which causes a lot of nasal congestion,” Dr. Rival explained to me, adding that I might feel as though I have a head cold for the next few weeks.

I was in and out of the hospital the same day. The first few days were the hardest because of slight breathing problems, which made it difficult for me to sleep. I wore bandages for about five days after the surgery and tape on my nose to keep the swelling down for a week or two. My fiancé took great care of me and wasn’t too squeamish when he had to change the pads on my nose. Eating was difficult, and I mainly ate soup for the first few days and slept with my head propped up with pillows.

I returned to work a week and a half after the surgery. I had told family and close friends that I was having rhinoplasty, but my boss and co-workers were just told that I was having surgery. My boss noticed right away and complimented me, but my assistant manager didn’t know what I’d had done. For the next six months there was subtle swelling, which is normal up to about a year, and my nose was numb for about eight months, but after only a few weeks I started to really get an idea of what my new nose looked like. I was ecstatic with the results. I felt like I was looking at another person in the mirror. I never believed my nose could look so good.

Dr. Rival told me that as I healed there was a chance of bumps or irregularities forming on the bridge of my nose. “Five to 10 per cent of patients will require further surgery or touch-ups to fix problems,” he explained, but, more than a year later, I’m still thrilled with my new nose. **e**

DO YOU HAVE A TRUE STORY TO TELL?

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