

Teenager Gets Plastic Surgery in New York

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NEW YORK- How young is too young to have cosmetic surgery? Most people usually wait until their twenties in order to have **liposuction**, a breast enhancement or any other form of plastic surgery, but not Nicolette Taylor, of Long Island N.Y. Taylor just underwent rhinoplasty to fix her nose that had been broken twice. No big deal right? Sure, except for the fact that she is only 13 years old.

Taylor's parents got her the nose job after enduring bullying by children in school and online. Although it is perfectly common to correct an imperfection in the nose, especially if it has been broken, plastic surgeons advise against getting any form of corrective surgery at such a young age for multiple reasons.

For one, children at age 13 are still growing. They might look one way today and appear completely different tomorrow. Likewise, they may also hate one aspect of their body on any given day and feel fine about it the next.

"Facial development, especially in the nasal area, is not complete until age 15 for females and 17 for males," said **Dr. Semira Bayati, a board-certified plastic surgeon in Newport Beach**. "Surgical alterations prior to these ages could lead to deformity, the need for repeat surgery later and are generally not recommended. Aside from correcting congenital or traumatic deformity that is considered medically necessary for form and function, elective facial surgery should be postponed until facial development is complete."

In addition, Dr. Bayati said that altering any features, especially facial features, at such a young age could have dramatic consequences for the child and how they perceive themselves. "Due to personality and identity development during these critical teenage years, facial alterations could have detrimental effects if it is done prematurely," she added. Dr. Bayati went on to explain that although it is not recommended, many parents still bring in their children to have cosmetic surgery at very young ages.

"I have mothers coming in with their teenage daughters asking for 'package deals' for breast augmentation or **liposuction**. Orange County, of course, is a unique market in terms of the volume of cosmetic surgery. There are cheerleaders in their teenage years who come in with a parent asking for **liposuction** of 'problem areas' such as a 'muffin top' or a disproportionately large belly or saddlebags," she said.

Dr. Bayati explained that she does not perform breast augmentation surgeries until the patient is at least 18 years of age and does not perform **liposuction** until the age of 15 for girls and 17 for boys. However, living in Orange County, she gets bombarded by parents requesting she make exceptions for their children. Even procedures that only make minor changes are not advisable, she says.

"Minor alterations in a critical age, that won't interfere with overall health and well-being in the long-run, could be life-altering and motivating for a young person." Dr. Bayati instead recommends a healthy and active lifestyle for the children and has no problem turning potential patients away. Children will keep growing, gaining and losing weight as well as undergoing changes to their overall physical appearance. Not only that, but getting cosmetic surgery at such a young age might set the patient up for a slew of psychological problems in the future, including a distorted body image. Anyone who wishes to make any changes to their body, no matter how minute, should wait until they are older and can make an informed decision that they will not regret.