Understanding the Nuances of Open vs. Closed Rhinoplasty

While the concept of “rhinoplasty” may seem relatively straightforward, the procedure actually offers many different options to patients. Rhinoplasty may involve refinement of the nasal tip, removal of a hump from the bridge, narrowing of the nose, or reduction in the size of the nostrils. These corrections can often be made with either open or closed rhinoplasty. The main difference between the two is the amount of access the surgeon has to the skeletal framework. Since rhinoplasty is a highly individualized procedure, the anatomy of your nose, your health history, and your desired outcome for the procedure must be assessed before making a decision on which type of rhinoplasty would be best for you.

Endonasal Rhinoplasty: Closed

Virtually all changes to the outer contour of the nose are dependent on the underlying structure. With an endonasal rhinoplasty, or “closed rhinoplasty,” the surgeon can make changes to the structure of the nose through very small incisions inside the nostrils. This approach is often requested by patients because no incisions - and consequently, no scars - will be visible externally. Less recovery time and less swelling are also associated with this technique.

During any surgical procedure that involves limited incisions, the surgeon's visibility will be limited. Sometimes, depending on the structure of the nose and what needs to be corrected, this may compromise the results of the procedure. Without an external incision, the nasal skin must be significantly stretched in order for the surgeon to reach the nasal framework, which can lead to distortion of the nasal cartilage. A closed rhinoplasty can be performed on most patients, but for those who require a more technical procedure, such as a revision rhinoplasty, an open rhinoplasty is often recommended.

External Rhinoplasty: Open

An external rhinoplasty, or “open rhinoplasty,” is performed with a small four to five millimeter incision made in the columella (the skin that divides the nostrils) called a transcolumnellar incision. With the nasal skin separated, the surgeon can fold the skin upward to easily see and access almost the entire nasal framework. This leads to a lower risk of nasal cartilage distortion and allows the surgeon to make adjustments more easily.

Although an open rhinoplasty may take longer than the closed approach, it often provides better results. This is because an open approach allows the surgeon to perform grafts, implants or contour stitching, none of which are possible with a closed approach. Furthermore, for those undergoing a secondary rhinoplasty or who have experienced significant trauma to the nose or face, an open rhinoplasty may be a necessity. Cleft-lip rhinoplasty, twisted noses, or severe post-rhinoplasty deformities should also be performed with the open technique.

If noticeable scarring is the main concern, those considering the procedure should note that patients with all skin tones have experienced successful results with open rhinoplasty. An experienced surgeon can precisely re-align the columella so the transcolumnellar incision will not result in an unfavorable scar.
For either the open or closed approach, the best results will be achieved with expert surgical hands. Be sure your surgeon is experienced with the rhinoplasty procedure and view his or her rhinoplasty before-and-after photos before making your decision.

If you are interested in the rhinoplasty procedure, please contact Dr. Abdullah using the information found at www.cosmeticsurgeonuae.com (Dubai), www.doctorplasticsurgery.com (Fargo), or www.aestheticskarachi.com (Karachi).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed Rhinoplasty</td>
<td>Less visibility and access for the surgeon, may not be as effective for complex procedures, possible cartilage distortion</td>
<td>Shorter procedure, shorter recovery time, no visible scars, less swelling and edema, general or sedation anesthesia can be used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Rhinoplasty</td>
<td>Possible columellar scar, longer procedure and recovery time, uses only general anesthesia</td>
<td>More visibility and access for the surgeon, can provide a better result for more complex procedures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>