

All About EARS!

BY DR. LUCIE CAPEK

In plastic surgery, I feel that we often neglect to talk about ears, an overlooked body part that plays an important role in facial aesthetics. A few of my recent posts on social media and consultations in the office drew comments like, "I didn't know you could do anything about that!" So, let's review some common ear concerns and procedures that may get you thinking.

Earlobe Injuries and Deformities

Earlobes – we've all got them. We pierce them, gage them and they thin out with age. Sometimes I use filler in the earlobes to give them a youthful plump. If you have a torn earlobe, this is easily repaired under local anesthesia and you can even re-pierce a few weeks later. Tired of your gages? This too can be fixed with a minor surgical procedure where I remove stretched tissue and reconstruct a small earlobe. In older patients, an earlobe reduction can create a more youthful appearance and is often done in combination with a facelift. Scars from all of these procedures are usually limited and fade a lot with time.

Prominent Ears

Sometimes ears stick out more than we'd like. For girls and women, it can make them self-conscious when wearing a ponytail, and both men and women may hesitate to cut their hair short. Kids with prominent ears are often teased or bullied in school.

I perform a setback Otoplasty to correct the problem of prominent ears by reshaping and repositioning the cartilage. Sometimes a small amount



of skin and cartilage is also removed through hidden incisions. This surgery can be done in children as young as 4 or 5, especially if they express a concern about it. In this case, the psychosocial benefits can be significant, and risks are quite low. Kids typically get this done over summer break or before they start elementary school.

For adult patients, I perform this procedure with local anesthesia and either oral or IV sedation. Social downtime is about a week or less, though time away from contact sports is about two months. Scarring is usually minimal and well hidden.

Large Ears: Macrotia

Many men and women perceive their ears as being too large because the height of their ears is taller than average. This may occur in young people or become an issue later in life and negatively affects self-esteem and confidence. Most people have no idea that this too can be corrected with plastic surgery!

An elegant and relatively minor procedure called Macrotia Reduction, or Reduction Otoplasty, involves removing some cartilage and skin through hidden incisions. In this way, I am able to reduce the height of the ears into a more average range with minimal scarring, while leaving the shape of the ear looking normal. I perform this procedure under local anesthesia and either oral or IV sedation. Social downtime is also about a week.

Cosmetic procedures can have a very positive impact on your self-esteem and confidence. Always choose an experienced specialist certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery.

Please contact us with any questions or comments!

