

## The pandemic has created a boom for plastic surgery, doctors say

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 By Justin RayStaff Writer Jan. 25, 2022 5:30 AM PT



Good morning, and welcome to the Essential California [newsletter](#). It's Tuesday, Jan. 25. I'm Justin Ray.

Though the pandemic has been devastating to most, there are a few industries that actually have benefited from the crisis. Some examples would be [Jeff Bezos](#), pets with attachment issues, and — surprisingly — plastic surgeons.

Cosmetic professionals tell The Times that a lot of people are undergoing procedures during the pandemic. While that might seem random at first, when you look a little deeper, it makes sense. Plastic surgeons Dr. Jason Litner and Dr. Peyman Solieman, who run Beverly Hills Profiles, located in West Hollywood, say the explanation has a lot to do with problems associated with having cosmetic procedures.

“A lot of people have a lot more time on their hands. Many have been working from home. And so they feel like they don't have to be as concerned about taking time away from work,” Litner tells The Times. “There's a lot more opportunity to recover at home away from people and be a little more discreet about it.”

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There are also many benefits that come with socially normalized mask wearing.

“With facial procedures, they’re wearing a mask, so it gives them the opportunity to be very discreet,” Solieman says. “They can get their nose done, they can get their face done, they can get their lips done. And during that entire recovery period, they’re largely hidden behind the mask.” He says that “at some point when the mask comes off, they’re seen and they look great and they don’t have to have be seen bruised or swollen.”

Zoom might also play a role. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons notes that “with the switch to online work and meetings, many people went from only looking at themselves while washing their hands during bathroom breaks to suddenly staring at their image on a screen for hours each day.”

Dr. Dino Elyassnia, a San Franciscoplastic surgeon, confirmed this idea to The Times, saying that, “occasionally I heard patients say, ‘I didn’t really notice how much my neck bothered me until I saw it in the camera.’”

The boom was not anticipated by many in the industry because “in moments of crisis, economic crisis or other crises, it’s a time period where people tend to kind of circle the wagons and discretionary spending tends to go down,” Litner says. But by summer 2020, “things really just kind of shot out of a cannon. We got very, very busy, and it really stayed that way all throughout the entire duration of the pandemic.”

“People couldn’t travel,” says Elyassnia. “People are spending money on other things, and one of them is plastic surgery.”

But it hasn’t all been easy during the pandemic. As most procedures are elective, there is a risk that public health officials at any point could make getting plastic surgery harder, or ban it altogether, to prevent the spread of COVID and the added strain on medical personnel and facilities. To that end, the California Department of Public Health reportedly evaluated whether to issue an order to hospitals statewide to suspend elective surgeries.

When contacted by The Times about the report, the department said, in part, “The state is continually evaluating local conditions and looking at all options to ensure that there is adequate hospital capacity to provide care to all Californians.”

Elyassnia emphasizes that while he enjoys being able to change peoples’ lives for the better, he recognizes that his services aren’t vital.

“I recognize that I’m not like this critical thing to the world,” he says.

“When I take somebody, for instance, a teenage girl who’s been teased about her nose, and you eliminate the problem that created the bullying and her confidence increases,” he adds, “I know I’m doing something relatively good for the world.”

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