

NEWBEAUTY

What Is a Mid Facelift and Who Is it Best For?

Brittany Burhop Fallon | June 30, 2023



GETTY IMAGES / IMAGE USED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Thanks to new techniques and advancements, getting a facelift today is vastly different than it was 10 years ago. Though there have always been deviations from the standard, or full facelift, the mid-facelift has become even more popular as of late, which can be attributed to the rise in less-invasive and shorter-recovery procedures. The recent Zoom Boom also elicited a spike in treatments for cheek rejuvenation. Here, top facial plastic surgeons explain more about the trending mid-facelift, including who it's best for and what the recovery period looks like.

What is a mid-facelift?

“A mid-facelift is a cosmetic surgical procedure that aims to rejuvenate and lift the middle portion of the face,” explains Beverly Hills, CA facial plastic surgeon [Kimberly J. Lee, MD](#). “It targets the area between the lower eyelids and the mouth, including the cheeks and nasolabial folds, or the laugh lines that run from the nose to the corners of the mouth.”

Who is a mid-facelift best for?

Dr. Lee says the procedure benefits those who have mild-to-moderate signs of aging, primarily in the middle portion of the face. “Ideal candidates have descended or flattened cheek fat pads that contribute to a tired or aged appearance, deep nasolabial folds, and a loss of volume in the cheeks or midface region. They also typically have relatively good skin elasticity and minimal signs of aging in the neck and jowl areas.”

According to New York facial plastic surgeon John Kang, MD, a mid-facelift is ideal for someone who looks great simply by drawing their hair back in a ponytail, thus often called ponytail lift. “In other words, if you look great by pulling your cheeks superiorly toward your temporal hairline area, you would be an ideal candidate for mid-facelift. The greatest amount of pull will be in the upper face, followed by the lower cheek area, which makes up the midface. However because skin is contiguous, depending on the patient’s anatomy and the technique used by the surgeon, you can often see improvement of the jawline and neck as well.”

“The mid-facelift is truly the hub to the whole aging process in the face, and I have embraced this technique for the last 25 years,” Dr. Kang continues. “For me, this surgery truly reverses the aging process from the gravity effect, which occurs in a superior to inferior direction.”

When is a full facelift necessary?

Though a mid-facelift can result in improvement of the jawline and neck for some people, if the patient’s main concern is for optimal improvement of their jawline, jowling and neck, a full facelift is recommended. “A full facelift is typically recommended for individuals with more advanced signs of aging, including significant skin laxity, deep wrinkles and folds, and jowls and/or neck sagging with loss of definition in the jawline and excess skin or fat in the neck area,” Dr. Lee adds. “A full facelift is often combined with a necklift to address the entire face, including the midface, lower face and neck, providing more significant lifting and rejuvenation. It’s always best to consult with a plastic surgeon for a personalized evaluation and recommendation based on your unique anatomy, concerns and goals.”

There is one very important caveat about the full facelift, Dr. Kang explains, “which takes the vector of the pull more laterally (backwards) toward the front and back of your ears. Depending on position of your ear and how wide and flat your bony features are, the classic jaw and neck pull around your ears can make you look awkwardly windswept in appearance, especially if you are a patient of Asian descent.”

In these cases, Dr. Kang says patients would be better served with a more conservative but upwards vector that the mid-facelift provides to obtain a more natural look. “This helps avoid the dreaded windswept look that optically can make the face look flatter. Many surgeons, including myself, have incorporated a composite type of lift where we perform a full facelift to address both the more lateral pull that the classic jawline and necklift requires, along with the superiorly directed pull that the mid-facelift provides.”

What does the surgery involve, and what downtime should be expected?

A mid-facelift can be performed in many different ways, so it's best to consult with a few different plastic surgeons in order to find the best option to deliver the results you're looking for. Generally speaking, Dr. Lee says the surgery involves "repositioning the underlying facial tissues, including the fat pads and muscles, to restore volume, reduce sagging and create a more youthful appearance." The procedure is performed under general anesthesia and can be combined with fat grafting depending on the patient.

For Dr. Kang specifically, the surgery entails "accessing the temporal space through an incision in the temporal hairline. Once the temporal space has been freed up, the midface is entered by passing through the malar (cheek) eminence. For patients with significant tear trough issues, the lower periorbital area is entered and freed up. The degree of pull is always tailored to the patient's unique individual anatomical foundations and aging process. Because the plane of dissection is mostly sub-SMAS [the superficial musculoaponeurotic system under the surface of the skin], there is usually minimal to no bruising, along with a moderate degree of swelling that requires a week to recover."

Remember that every patient is different, and some will bruise and swell more than others, regardless of the technique used. Additionally, patients should expect their doctor to provide detailed instructions and recommendations for optimal healing, including taking a break from strenuous activities and exercise. It will also be advised that patients sleep on their back for a week or more during recovery.

<https://www.newbeauty.com/what-is-a-mid-facelift/>