

The Rising Popularity and Possible Dangers of Female Genital Cosmetic Procedures

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Based upon: Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery: The Quest for the Perfect Vagina

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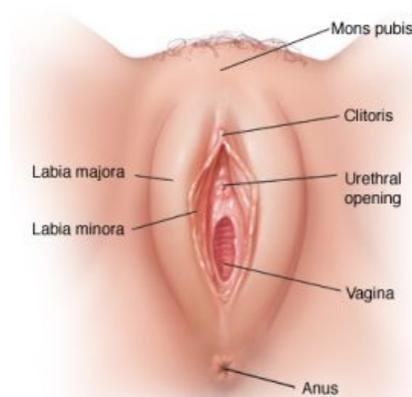
What are female genital cosmetic procedures?

Female genital cosmetic procedures are surgeries which modify the outward appearance or function of a woman's sexual organs. Women may have these procedures in hopes of enhancing sexual performance or pleasure, or to improve the appearance of their genitalia.

Who offers these procedures and what are examples of these procedures?

Dermatologists, plastic surgeons, and gynecologists offer these services. The following list gives examples of female cosmetic procedures. Use the picture below to refer to an **idealized** version of a woman's anatomy.

FEMALE ANATOMY



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Image Source: Mayo Clinic

The following is a list of procedures done to the external (outside) female genitalia. These procedures can sometimes be referred to collectively as types of “vulvoplasty.”

- Labiaplasty — the addition or removal of tissue of the labia minora or labia majora (the skin folds that surround the vaginal opening)

- Hymenoplasty or ‘revirgination’ — the restoration of the intact hymen (a thin membrane that surrounds the opening to the vagina)
- Clitoral hoodoplasty — removal of the clitoral hood (the thin layer of tissue that lies over top of the clitoris)
- Vulvar lipoplasty — the removal of fat from the mons pubis (the upper mound)

The following is a list of procedures done to the internal (inner) female genitalia. These procedures can sometimes be referred to collectively as types of “vaginoplasty.”

- Surgical vaginal tightening — narrowing of the vaginal opening and canal
- 'Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation'® — a trademarked procedure for vaginal tightening using laser therapy
- G-spot augmentation or amplification ('G-shot'®) — injections of fat, collagen (a structural protein) or other substances into a pre-determined 'G-spot' (an area of the vagina sensitive to sexual stimulation)
- Orgasm Shot ('O-Shot'®) — a trademarked procedure in which a woman’s own blood products are injected into the clitoris and upper vaginal wall with the intention of inducing inflammation and tissue repair

Are these procedures effective and what are the dangers?

- These procedures are generally **not** considered medically necessary. With each procedure there are some risks of pain and damage to surrounding structures including the sexual organs. **Though they are heavily marketed, these procedures and devices are not backed by strong scientific evidence.** Rigorous studies are needed to determine their efficacy, safety, and long-term physical and psychological effects.
- In addition, these procedures are non-standardized. This means there are no proven or established techniques to guide them. Some procedures, such as laser based vaginal cosmetic procedures, are still considered by major specialist groups to be experimental.
- Lastly, pornographic and other highly curated sexual images generate a false of what is normal. Female genitals can be healthy yet appear vastly different from one person to the next. Societal trends also fluctuate in terms of what is idealized. Overall, the marketing of female genital cosmetic procedures reaffirms unrealistic standards and upholds negative self-body images.

Additional reference:

Janz-Robinson, Estella M. “Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery.” Edited by Amanda Oakley, DermNet New Zealand, July 2017, www.dermnetnz.org/topics/female-genital-cosmetic-surgery/.