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**COSMETIC SURGERY \* FACE \* BODY \* SMILE \* STYLE \* WELLBEING**



# Expert panel

We ask leading surgeons for their views on achieving the best results from a facelift, the potential risks and other important considerations.



**Dr Michael Cadier**

is one of the UK's leading surgeons, offering a complete range of cosmetic solutions using advanced invasive and non-invasive techniques. He is a member of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) and practises in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Call 01722 435176 or visit [www.michaelcadier.co.uk](http://www.michaelcadier.co.uk)



**Rajiv Grover**

has published more than 50 book chapters and journal articles in the UK and USA since graduating in Medicine in 1989. He sits on the council of BAAPS and is responsible for the UK national audit of cosmetic surgery and safety through the Royal College of Surgeons. Call 020 7486 4301 or visit [www.rajivgrover.co.uk](http://www.rajivgrover.co.uk)



**Professor Laurence Kirwan MD FRCS**

was born in Britain and did his training in aesthetic plastic surgery in the USA. These days he is an international pioneering surgeon, practising in London, New York and Connecticut. Call 020 7637 4455 or visit [www.drkirwan.co.uk](http://www.drkirwan.co.uk)



**Charles Nduka MA, MD, FRCS, FRCS (plas)**

graduated from Oxford University and Imperial College London with distinctions in surgery. He has been awarded the Gold Medal in plastic surgery, and is a member of BAAPS. His focus is to achieve a natural-looking improvement with minimally invasive techniques and shorter scars. 0845 838 6996 or [www.charlesnduka.co.uk](http://www.charlesnduka.co.uk)



**Shailesh Patel**

is an aesthetic surgeon who is on the GMC's Specialist Register for Plastic Surgery and is a member of IPRAS. He has special interest in facial and endoscopic facial surgery, and a huge Bollywood clientele to boot. He practises in London and Mumbai. Call 020 7467 8395 or visit [www.aestheticsurgery.com](http://www.aestheticsurgery.com)

## How can I tell if I would benefit from a facelift?

"A facelift is an anti-gravity procedure, most effective at raising the cheeks, jowls and neck to a more youthful position," says Charles Nduka. "A woman can get an impression of a facelift's effect by lying on her back whilst looking at a hand-held mirror."

## What are the primary considerations before undertaking a facelift?

"All patients need to be medically fit but, more importantly, I look into the psychology of any potential patient," says Michael Cadier. "I have to make sure patients have realistic expectations; a facelift is not a solution to other life problems."

"It's crucial to choose a surgeon you trust and who understands you," says Rajiv Grover. "In your consultation, explore whether your expectations will be met and ensure you understand the risks and predicted recovery time."

"With regards to timing, make sure you are at your ideal weight and choose a time when you have at least 10 days to take out of your schedule," advises Laurence Kirwan.

## Who is a good candidate for this procedure?

"Usually non-smokers, aged 45-plus, in good medical health. The best patient will have evidence of facial ageing but will be realistic about what a facelift can achieve," says Rajiv Grover.

"Those with a positive outlook tend to recover fastest after cosmetic surgery," says Charles Nduka. "It is important to minimise stress leading

up to surgery, and take time to pamper yourself afterwards."

"Physically, the best candidates will be experiencing loss of cheek volume and will look tired, with deep lines around the mouth, sagging jowls and a wrinkly neck," adds Laurence Kirwan.

### What are the risks involved in facelift surgery?

"Infections are possible but rare, as is skin damage, which may occur on incision sites around the ear," warns Michael Cadier. "There can also be injury to the facial nerve, although this is usually temporary."

"Bleeding is the most common problem and requires a trip back to theatre to clear it up," states Laurence Kirwan, "though using the new tissue glue Tisseel reduces the risk."

"Bruising and swelling will not be long-lasting, but should be fully explained to the patient beforehand as this is often the scariest part," says Shailesh Patel.

"You will also be left with permanent scars, although they will fade after a few months," adds Michael. "An experienced surgeon should ensure scars are carefully placed so that they are not noticeable post-surgery."

### How long will it take to recover from the procedure?

"You'll require one or two nights in hospital, two weeks off work, three weeks before going back to sports activities, and make sure you leave it four weeks before you're planning to be at a major social event, such as being mother of the bride," advises Rajiv Grover.

"Recovery time also depends on the technique used," says Michael Cadier. "The average recovery is around 10

days, although this can be much less with newer, less invasive techniques."

### What is the youngest age you should consider a facelift?

"Most surgeons would hesitate to



operate on someone under the age of 45, but there are always special circumstances," says Rajiv Grover. "Massive weight loss can cause accelerated ageing in the face and would make a facelift suitable for someone younger."

Laurence Kirwan disagrees: "I see a facelift not as an anti-ageing operation but as facial reshaping. I have done the procedure on people in their early 30s and have seen good results from facelifts on those in their mid-20s."

### What is the maximum age for this procedure?

Michael Cadier would not usually

operate on anyone over 80: "I did once treat a woman of 87, but at this age it is a very different procedure that generally involves only lifting the skin under a local anaesthetic, which makes it less risky," he says.

Rajiv Grover states: "The decision to have surgery is based on biological age rather than chronological age; someone's suitability for a facelift relates most of all to their medical fitness at the time."

Kirwan agrees: "There are no minimum or maximum ages; it depends on the health and the psychological wellbeing of the patient at any age."

### Are the results permanent?

"Facelifting puts the clock back by between seven and 10 years, but the clock keeps ticking," says Rajiv Grover. "However, as

you continue to age you will always be 7-10 years 'younger' than if you had not had surgery."

Michael Cadier agrees: "The results of the procedure are lasting but a facelift cannot stop the ageing process. With that in mind, most women may combine a facelift procedure with an eye lift, brow lift, neck lift or chemical peel to enhance the longevity of what is achieved."

"You will, to a diminishing level over time, always look younger than your stated age," says Laurence Kirwan. "Most patients feel they need another facelift after 10 years, but that interval varies between patients."



## Alternatives...



### Thread facelift

Less invasive and risky than a conventional procedure, a thread facelift is suitable for those showing early signs of ageing, such as minor sagging around the cheeks, jaw-line and neck. The procedure can be performed in just an hour or two, with little or no anaesthesia, which means you stay fully conscious and can actually approve your new look as the surgeon works.

Special threads are inserted into the face through tiny incisions in the target area, then attached to the skin tissue and pulled back to lift and smooth the face. The results are quite subtle but noticeable almost instantly. The threads become hidden within the skin, holding everything in place. Any scarring should be virtually invisible.

Cost is typically £1,500-£3,500.

### Lunchtime Lift

Pioneered by US surgeon Dr Myra Danish, the Lunchtime Lift is able to lift the lower eyelids and neck and restore the natural curves and fullness in the cheeks and face in as little as an hour. The procedure uses Endotine mid-facelift techniques that lift the

soft tissue from the bone, reposition it upward, then fix it in place with small tissue holders until it naturally re-attaches to the bone (this typically takes 30-60 days, by which time the tissue holders will have been naturally absorbed by the body).

After surgery, you will experience some swelling and bruising in your mid-face region, which may take several weeks to completely resolve. "When someone has this surgery the reaction should be, 'You look great, what have you been doing?'," says Dr Danish. [www.drdenish.com](http://www.drdenish.com)

### Waterhouse Facelift

Leading plastic surgeon Norman Waterhouse recently unveiled a new kind of surgical facelift. Whereas the traditional facelift technique involves manipulating the muscles of the lower face in a variety of directions, Waterhouse's procedure, developed over the last 20 years, tightens the muscles in a lateral direction only. This achieves a very natural result where the neck, jowls, cheeks and nose-to-mouth lines are rejuvenated. The facelift can also be performed under local anaesthetic to minimize recovery time.

"This is still a formal surgical procedure and is not a 'minimal' or 'lunchtime' lift," warns Norman. "However, with this new procedure there is less downtime and a significant reduction in swelling and bruising, which minimises time off work". [www.norman-waterhouse.com](http://www.norman-waterhouse.com)

### MACS Lift

The MACS (Minimal Access Cranial Suspension) Lift is a new modification of the S Lift, involving the permanent

raising of the facial tissues.

Incisions are made in the hairline above the ear, then a small portion of the cheek is lifted, while maintaining a good blood supply to the skin. Permanent suspension sutures are then used to elevate the underlying tissue and suspend it onto the bone, lifting sagging necks, jowls and cheeks. After three hours in surgery, expect some discomfort and bruising, particularly around the eyes.

Ideally suited to the younger patient, the MACS Lift has gained popularity as the post-operative swelling is much less than normal, making recovery quicker, plus the MACS Lift involves very little likelihood of damage to the facial nerve and - due to the good blood supply to the skin throughout - this method is safer for smokers.

### Mini Facelift Procedure

The best candidates for a mini facelift, sometimes known as a weekend facelift, are in their 30s, experiencing the first signs of ageing and wishing to reduce minor sagging in targeted areas around the cheeks, jaw and neck. This is because the mini facelift only tightens the skin, without affecting the facial muscles.

Using small incisions, the surgeon lifts, repositions, and removes facial tissue and skin to reduce unwanted sagging and drooping. The procedure can take as little as two hours, and you could be back to normal in just 3-5 days. There is also a reduced likelihood of scarring, but the results are relatively short-lived - expect to need secondary treatments within five years.

Average cost is £2,000-£4,000.