

# THE UK GUIDE TO RHINOPLASTY

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Everything  
you need to  
know when  
considering  
rhinoplasty



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# Introduction

I chose rhinoplasty as it is the most complex of the aesthetic facial surgical challenges to master; and I strive to bring a softer, more harmonious and gentle look to the face by creating a natural nasal shape with effortless airflow.

In this guide, I will share what you must do before rhinoplasty, what happens when you come to hospital, and what typically happens after rhinoplasty. I'll share how you might feel, when you might feel ready to re-engage in your regular routine, and your general responsibilities to ensure you best recover from the procedure.

I'll be sharing how I talk to my patients when they are in a consultation with me. Rhinoplasty isn't right for everyone. Together we'll discuss the benefits, the limitations and the risks, so that you can decide whether rhinoplasty is right for you. At the consultation, you should meet your surgeon so that you can also consider how well they understand what you specifically want.

For me, being able to see and share my patients' happiness and greater personal ease, calm and confidence after rhinoplasty is the ultimate reward.

Best regards,



Mr Julian M Rowe-Jones,  
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“This guide was created out of conversations I’ve had with patients. I’ve recently sat down and answered similar questions on video so I could share this information online as well as here in written form. I hope you like the conversational and straight forward nature of this guide.”



# 1 What are the benefits of rhinoplasty?

When we embark upon considering rhinoplasty together, I want you to be able to tell me what you hope the benefits are going to be for you. Rhinoplasty is a highly complex technical exercise, we will together be determining what the aesthetic goals are, but we need to think beyond that. You need to be able to tell me, in advance, how you're going to measure the success of rhinoplasty for yourself. If I think your defined benefits will follow from surgery then it'll be a pleasure to recommend it.

Sometimes what you want and what you think the benefits are going to be don't follow. There are some patients whose expectations are unrealistic and I will advise against surgery. For those patients who do have surgery, whose aesthetic goals are met, benefits follow, really in terms of improved self-confidence and self-esteem and that is what I am looking to achieve for all my patients: happier patients whose level of self-confidence is higher than it was before surgery.

# 2 What are the limitations of rhinoplasty?

It's frustrating, but there are definitely limitations in what's possible with the nose. The result you get is dependent on where you start. We can only change things so much. The skin has to stretch or the skin has to shrink, there's a limit to how much that's possible.

The nose is a very sophisticated structure with multiple pieces and all of those things have to sometimes be taken apart and put back together again. There's a limit to how much we can safely do that. We want the nose to work properly at the end too, so we want it to look good but it also has to work. There are many things to take into account and there are times when it just isn't safe to do surgery.

# 3 What are the risks of rhinoplasty?

All operations carry risk. I don't believe there's such a thing as a minor operation and I really believe that patients need to know the risks of their procedure, the steps of their procedure and their operation plan before they decide whether they should have surgery or not. When we do go ahead with surgery there are general risks and there are risks specific to your operation plan.

The general risks are really those of any operation: bleeding and infection. We have a special anaesthetic protocol that minimises your risk of bleeding and we have a very vigorous antibacterial protocol that minimises your risk of infection but it can never be zero.

Beyond those, the risks as I said earlier, relate to the individual steps of your planned procedure, because no two rhinoplasties are the same. In the best hands, unpredictability cannot be eliminated. You can perform a surgical step very well and something will happen that you didn't anticipate and that's because of infinite variation and anatomy. So you could end up with, for example, asymmetry in your nose that you didn't have beforehand.

Now obviously we would talk about revision surgery, but it is possible that your nose never gets back to how it was before, so you could be left, in very rare circumstances, with a nose you are permanently more unhappy with. Fortunately, that is very rare and most things can be corrected with revision surgery but you have to understand if you're going to have rhinoplasty that you may be the one person for whom something unexpected and uncorrectable happens.

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## 4

# Is it right for me?

Is rhinoplasty right for me is a question a lot of patients ask. That's a partnership decision; you getting to know whether you like us and us getting to know whether we feel we can help you. Helping you means not just hopefully achieving the shape for your nose that you want but also working out whether it's going to make the difference in your life generally and that's a very sophisticated area to assess.

Sometimes you might think we're asking probing questions that you weren't expecting, but as I say we want to know whether psychologically we are going to make the difference in your life that you want. Sometimes that means saying no and not recommending rhinoplasty, but if you get on with us and we get on with you and you think from what you've seen, that the rhinoplasty results we can achieve are right for you, then we're on.

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## 5

# Why is rhinoplasty not right for everyone?

Rhinoplasty might not be right for you and it's very important for us to work out whether that's the case or not. We want to meet your expectations and ideally exceed them but sometimes expectations are unrealistic.

They may be unrealistic either because technically the shape of the nose you want to change isn't possible or because what you hope that it's going to do for your life isn't possible. If we don't meet your expectation then nobody's happy, so we will recommend against surgery for some patients.

## 6 What happens when you ring clinics about rhinoplasty?

Speaking about The Nose Clinic, when you ring us about rhinoplasty, the first thing we're going to do is say 'Hi' and find out whether you want an appointment. If you want an appointment, that's great, we'll organise it for a time that suits you. You might actually be ringing because you want some information and we're very good at providing information. We really want to understand what it is you're after and we'll have a detailed question and answer list to work out what it is you're looking for.

## 7 What happens at a consultation?

We're always really happy when anybody wants to see us, so the first thing we'll do is say 'Hi, you're very welcome', but obviously rhinoplasty is serious and the more information we have the better we can determine what's right for you.

We will take a very detailed history, to find out what it is you're looking to achieve with rhinoplasty. A medical history is also done because this is proper medicine, it's not like visiting the hairdresser.

As part of that you also have your nose carefully examined, inside and out and have high quality photographs taken. They're really important. A good rhinoplasty result starts with the planning and it is the rhinoplasty photographs that help us with that. Then we'll talk about surgical options, we'll talk about after-care and we'll make it very clear what the risks and limitations are of surgery for you. That's how we like to run it.

## 8 What do you need to think about when choosing a surgeon?

When you're thinking about how to choose a surgeon, you really need to consider several areas. The first area is how well are they planning my surgery? That means: have they listened to me, have they understood exactly what I'm hoping to achieve. If they haven't, don't go ahead with surgery with them.

Number two, have they analysed my nose, do they understand my nose. I put a huge stock on analysis, not everybody does. I think you have to. Analysis is where a good rhinoplasty result starts. I use high-quality photographs with proper backgrounds, not everybody does. I use computer programmes to measure angles and lengths, not everybody does. I really believe they should. I also think they need to communicate well what is achievable. If they haven't told you what they think is achievable, don't have surgery with them.

How do they communicate? I use image manipulation software, not everybody does. I think it's vital. They mustn't be unrealistic with it and you need to ask them: 'can you achieve this?' 'Do you think you can achieve this?' If they say yes, then you have something against which to measure your outcome. This is vital.

Of course they need to have great experience doing the surgery. Numbers aren't necessarily the best indicator. I'm taking longer to do a rhinoplasty now than I did 10 years ago, because my attention to detail, my understanding and my sophistication are much greater than they were then. I do fewer rhinoplasties a year than I used to,

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because they are taking longer. Nevertheless I think it's important that you know they are committed and are not doing a bit of everything. I don't do very much else, I really just do rhinoplasty.

So those factors are very key. You need to know how you are going to look afterwards. Will they revise your nose if you're not happy with it? Do you think they have the confidence to revise it, if necessary? These are vitally important things. Do they have a team to look after you? We have a team, we are available for you afterwards, we have ongoing care built into our protocol, our plan and pathway for you. Those are all vital things. Some people ask 'what about revision rates?' Revision rates can be helpful but some surgeons are more keen to get a great result. We will suggest revision more than those who don't care about you. I think those are the key things you need to think about.

We see a lot of patients to discuss rhinoplasty at The Nose Clinic. If you like us and we get on really well, I'd like all of you to have surgery with me. I can bring significant surgical experience and expertise to rhinoplasty for you. I've been interested in rhinoplasty for twenty years and I've been specialising in rhinoplasty for ten to fifteen years and I learn more everyday. It's a fascinating operation and I'm passionate about it.

I'm lucky that I teach rhinoplasty both nationally and internationally and the

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reflection that brings, makes me a better surgeon. I'm constantly talking to others who are leaders in the field about the complexity and the difficulty of rhinoplasty. I think that contact makes me a better surgeon performing what is a really difficult operation.

We also have a fantastic team here: we have a specialist nurse, we have a specialist patient liaison and that means we have seen literally thousands of patients. The team knows what your anxieties and hopes are, so they can cater for them. It also means that we've got people around for you all the time: before, during and especially after surgery. After surgery is a difficult

time and you are often anxious and worried and we are available for you all the time. We think that is a really important part of what we can offer you.

## 9 What must you do before rhinoplasty?

When you book your date for rhinoplasty with us at The Nose Clinic we will give you a comprehensive list of instructions to follow. If you follow these I am confident there won't be a problem. We will also call you nearer the time to make sure that you understood everything and followed the instructions.

The key things really are to avoid any medications that might increase your chances of bleeding. There are things you might not have thought about like aspirin and garlic, and we'll discuss this at your consultation as well. If we keep good communication going and you follow the instructions, everything should be fine.

## 10 What happens when you come to hospital for rhinoplasty?

When you come to the hospital for your rhinoplasty, you will be taken to the ward and you'll be shown your room, that's where I'll come and see you before we go to theatre. I will have reviewed all your notes, all your photographs, all the analysis we've done and all your wishes and hopes, so that I'm fully conversant with everything that's gone before.

We won't talk for a long time before rhinoplasty because you'll know everything at that stage and it's a quick review really, just so you know that I'm in the zone for you. You'll also see my anaesthetist and he'll talk to you about what he does. He can answer any concerns you have and we'll put your mind at rest. It's not long after that the nurses come to escort you to the operating room and before your know it, you will be asleep and your operation will be finished.

# 11 What happens after rhinoplasty?

I really like my rhinoplasty patients to stay in hospital overnight, that way I can come and visit you and see you the next morning, tell you how things went and make sure you're comfortable and everything is right for you before you go home. It also gives the nurses the chance to clean your nostrils, teach you how to look after your dressings and it means we can give you another dose of antibiotics as well, which I think is very helpful.

When you go home you have all the instructions you need, telling you what you should do and what you shouldn't do and there's always support over the phone or over email. If you have any worries you just have to get in touch with us and we will let you know what you should or shouldn't be doing. We then see you a week later to take the dressing off the outside of your nose. That doesn't hurt and I'm using dissolvable stitches more and more in the nose now which is something I specifically like to do so that it's rare we actually have to take any stitches out (that's something people are often a bit worried about.) I check the inside of your nose at that stage, check that you are healing well and make sure that all your questions are answered. Then we'll arrange to see you about six to twelve weeks later.

At that stage a lot of the swelling has settled, the nose will have healed and then we get a really good idea of how things are going to turn out. I'm really keen that we keep in touch. It takes about a year for everything to settle down completely, sometimes even longer - like 18 months, and in revision cases even up to five years. I want to see you until your nose is fully healed and until we know what the final result is. A lot of places might operate on you and then say: 'we'll see you only once more' but I really don't think that's right. I have to say from a selfish point of view it also means I can see my long-term results and I can judge whether I got it right, whether there are things I can do better and so as part of my ongoing commitment to rhinoplasty I will see patients for as long as they want with no charge.

“When you go home you have all the instructions you need, telling you what you should do and what you shouldn't do, and there's always support over the phone, over email, or in person if you like.”



## 12 How will you feel after rhinoplasty?

A lot of patients are worried about how they might feel after rhinoplasty and we put a lot of effort and time into trying to describe what it's like and in reassuring the patient that it's not what they think it might be.

I work really closely with my anaesthetist who's a critical part of the team, so that when you wake up, all the painkillers you need are already in your system. Patients also worry they might feel sick and again we put the anti sickness drugs into your system, so they're already working before you wake up.

We organise a gentle wake up from the anaesthetic too, so that you don't panic and that you're not scared. The nurses are very good. They're there with you as you wake up, holding your hand and reassuring you, so it's not nearly as bad as you might think. It always amazes me that patients very rarely have pain after rhinoplasty. Perhaps a lot of that has to do with the fact that, not only are the drugs in the system, but they know what to expect because we've concentrated so hard on it beforehand.

**“A lot of patients are worried about how they might feel after rhinoplasty and we put a lot of effort and time into trying to describe what it's like.”**



## 13 When can you take exercise and go back to work?

After rhinoplasty I would usually advise two weeks off from going to the gym or vigorous exercise. That's because there's a chance that you might get a nose bleed, or you might get more swelling, so I think it is worth taking it easy physically for two weeks.

When you can go back to work depends on what work you do. Most patients, for three or four days I think, benefit from taking things easy. You feel like you've developed a cold, the nose is uncomfortable, although it's extremely rare for it to be painful and you're not likely to be very productive. But there are a lot of people who do work at a computer or work from home and I usually say, after those three or four days, if you gently want to start some light work, that's perfectly fine.

## 14 What are your responsibilities?

I firmly believe that rhinoplasty is a partnership and that means both parties have responsibilities. Your responsibilities are to make sure you've understood everything I've said. I cannot make the decision for you; different people have different attitudes towards risk. My responsibilities are to make sure you understand the risks and that I've answered all your questions.

I can recommend surgery to you. I can also recommend that you don't have surgery. If I have recommended surgery to you, it's still your decision. Your responsibility is to determine, from what I've told you, whether rhinoplasty is right for you. I do not take the final responsibility as to whether you decide on surgery or not.

# Conclusion

When all is said and done, how do you decide whether you're going to actually take the leap and have a rhinoplasty? That's going to be different for everybody, but there probably are some common things to reflect on.

Firstly, do you like me? If you don't like me, don't have a rhinoplasty with me. So that's number one. Number two, do you trust what I've said is true? That's very important and if you don't believe what I've said is true, then I'm not right for you. Number three, can you accept risk? I am very experienced at rhinoplasty, I will do everything I can to get the best result possible for you, with the lowest risk, but I cannot make risk zero, so you have to accept that there is risk involved.

I cannot guarantee your result, nobody can, but I can promise you that I will do everything my experience has given me to get you the best result possible. So if your gut instinct is that you like me, if your gut instinct is that you trust me, if your gut instinct is: 'yes, that improvement is fine by me,' and you accept that there is risk, then that is the time to say yes.

I hope you have enjoyed this conversational guide about rhinoplasty in the UK. The best thing to do when you are ready is have a conversation with a qualified surgeon who can answer questions about your unique needs. I wish you all the best on this journey.