

How the 'Chinplant' has become the latest must-have for U.S teens wanting to dazzle on prom night

By SADIE WHITELOCKS and TED THORNHILL

- 20,680 chin augmentations carried out in the U.S. in 2011
- Procedure grew more than breast augmentation, Botox and liposuction combined
- 'On video chat technology, they may notice that their jawline is not as sharp as they want it to be,' says Dr Malcolm Roth

As if prom night in America wasn't expensive enough, chin implants are fast being added to teens' party shopping list, along with pricey dresses.

There has been a 71 per cent increase in the procedure being carried out in the U.S in the past year, with many of them being performed on high school girls desperate to look more glamorous than their peers.

It doesn't come cheap, though. An implant costs between \$3,500 (£2,150) and \$7,500, with some girls also splashing out over \$10,000 on a dress.



Growing trend: This patient underwent a chin implant, rhinoplasty, and neck liposuction to change the shape of her face - pictures courtesy of Dr. Sherman, a plastic surgeon based in San Diego



Dressed to impress: High school kids are increasingly turning to surgery to look their best for prom night

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) believes that the trend is being fuelled by technology such as Skype and smartphones.

A spokesman for the society told The Sunday Times: 'At proms in the past, teens would line up for photographs and face the camera. But the rise of more informal images, captured during video chats or by smartphones when they are leaning over a buffet maybe, has shown them angles of their face they had not seen in a mirror.' Overall more than 20,000 procedures were carried out in the U.S. in 2011.

The two most popular options include a mentoplasty, which decreases the size of a chin which 'juts out' or is perceived as being too large and maxillofacial corrective surgery which actually alters the jaw position.

Before surgery - which can take up to four hours in some cases - patients are usually given a local anaesthetic to numb the area and a silicone implant is inserted under the chin to give a stronger, more defined jawline.



'I do a lot of video chats and noticed that my double chin was very pronounced. It really, really bothered me,' said software manager Lizette Stephens

In many cases the patient can return home the same day, with soreness and swelling lasting for around two weeks.

Commenting on the latest findings ASPS president Dr Malcolm Roth said: 'The chin and jawline are among the first areas to show signs of aging.'

'People are considering chin augmentation as a way to restore their youthful look just like a facelift or eyelid surgery.'

'We also know that as more people see themselves on video chat technology, they may notice that their jawline is not as sharp as they want it to be.'

Lizette Stephens, a manager at a software company, opted for a chin plant as new telecommunication technologies made her increasingly conscious of her double chin. She said: 'I do a lot of video chats and I'm in a lot of photos and noticed that my double chin was very pronounced. It really, really bothered me.'

'I wanted to do something about it to get a more profound profile and more definition in my chin area.'

She received a chin implant from Dr Darrick Antell, an ASPS Member Surgeon based in New York.

Dr Antell, who has studied the profiles of many chief executives, said: 'We know that chief executives tend to be tall, attractive, good-looking people.'

'We now know that these people also tend to have a stronger chin.'

'As a result, people subconsciously associate a stronger chin with more authority, self-confidence and trustworthiness.'

Other cosmetic procedures that saw an increase in popularity in the U.S. last year included lip augmentation (up 49 per cent), cheek implants (up 47 per cent), laser skin resurfacing (up nine per cent), soft tissue fillers (up seven per cent) and facelifts (up five per cent).

According to the Enterprise Business Video Forecast: 2011-16 video conferencing is becoming one of the fastest growing IT markets in the world and by 2016 the industry will be worth £2.3bn.

Orders for telepresence have already been signed by a number of global organisations, including HSBC, GlaxoSmithKline and News Corporation, whose executives are using the technology as a replacement for travelling to face-to-face meetings. Richard Thurston, Ovum analyst and author of the report, commented: 'Enterprises are seizing the huge opportunity that video conferencing offers them to cut costs and improve productivity by reducing business travel.'

'They are starting to use video conferencing much more frequently because of ongoing economic concerns, continued efforts to reduce their carbon footprint, enhancements in video technology and price reductions that are improving the business case.'

Despite chin implants taking off in the U.S., in the UK the procedure is still relatively rare. A spokesperson from UK cosmetic surgery provider, Transform, said: 'Chin implants are still relatively rare in the UK, although they've been available to clients for more than 10 years.'

'Over the past 18 months to two years we've seen a steady increase in the number of those opting for the procedure, but we're around three years behind the U.S. so we expect a similar pattern to gradually emerge.'

CHIN AUGMENTATION PROCEDURES CARRIED OUT IN THE U.S. IN 2011
Overall: 20,680 (+ 71 per cent)
Women: 10,087 (+ 66 per cent)
Men: 10,593 (+ 76 per cent)
20-29 years: 2,750 (+ 68 per cent)
30-39 years: 2,587 (+ 69 per cent)
40-54 years: 5,075 (+ 77 per cent)
55 and over: 8,459 (+ 70 per cent)
SOURCE: American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)