

# Dr. Sam Rizk's Journey through Pandemic Challenges and Technological Triumphs

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In the realm of surgical artistry and precision, there exists a remarkable surgeon whose journey has woven together creativity, innovation, and resilience. For Dr. Sam Rizk, the path to shaping the human form began as a passion for sculpting, a love that predated the halls of medical school. The canvas, however, transformed from clay to living tissue, where precision became the guiding principle.



Dr. Rizk delves into the challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic, which, surprisingly, reshaped the landscape of cosmetic surgery. He also navigates the world of technological innovation that has been harnessed to not only adapt to the changing times but also to set new standards in the field of facial plastic surgery.

## Origins and Motivation in the Industry

I'm a very creative person and have always loved to sculpt, but it wasn't until I got to medical school and became interested in facial anatomy that I realized I could make a career out of sculpting faces. As an artist, I have a huge appreciation for the human form and the nuances of the face—and as a surgeon, precision is everything. Combining those interests has enabled me to attract clients who want to look like the best versions of themselves. That's my sweet spot.

## Adapting to a New Reality

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Initially, we thought we might see a decrease in patients, but we actually had a huge boost in consults (though they were virtual, of course). Ultimately, the pandemic created a new demand for surgery and other cosmetic procedures, and this was due to several factors. Not only were people spending a lot more time watching themselves on camera during virtual meetings, but they also had some money to burn since no one was going out or traveling. And, in terms of logistics, everyone who was forced to work remotely suddenly had the luxury of unlimited recovery time.

## **Technological Innovations During the Pandemic**

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As far as technological changes, we've noticed there's more of an interest in making dramatic changes with surgery versus subtle tweaks with non-invasive treatments. We've also improved surgical recovery techniques by using tissue glues that eliminate the use of drains after a facelift or neck lift surgery.

And with the advent of telescopes in facelift and neck lift surgery, we're able to use much smaller incisions.

## **Post-Pandemic Technological Transformations**

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The concept of virtual consults was very new to us at first, but once we worked out the kinks it became a convenient and effective option that we continue to offer. Since the early days of the pandemic, we've dramatically improved and upgraded our system to make it easier for patients to connect with us.

## **The Future of Technology for Facial Plastic Surgeons**

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There is much more of an interest in dramatic changes with surgery versus other non-invasive treatments, so we are continually looking for ways to improve surgical recovery times. Right now, that means eliminating the use of drains after facelift and neck lift surgery, which account for 50% of our business. Instead, we use tissue glues which have been incredibly effective in reducing scarring and speeding up recovery time. Most of my patients are back to work in a week and camera-ready in two, which would have been unheard of even a few years ago. It's hard to predict what the future will bring, but the recent advent of telescopes has enabled us to dramatically reduce incision sizes. As this technology continues to evolve, they'll become smaller and smaller.