

Baby Facelifts, Explained By 4 Doctors

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When it comes to celebrities getting work done, there's no question that stars have become more transparent in recent years. Still, many are hesitant to share full plastic surgery details and often maintain they've only had "tweakments" like lip filler or Botox injections. Some A-listers even claim their objectively "perfect" faces are simply the result of good skin care and lifestyle habits like drinking water or sleeping on their back every night.

This is their prerogative, of course. What someone does or doesn't do to their face and body is their choice, and just because you're famous doesn't mean you owe anyone an explanation. That said, whether we like it or not, celebrities are influential. They can prompt someone to buy a skin-care product they recommend, or even book a cosmetic procedure in hopes of a similar look. When that outcome doesn't happen, it can be confusing.

The more likely scenario happening in Hollywood, according to celebrity plastic surgeons, is that stars are getting what is often referred to as "baby" facelifts, or micro versions of the real thing. The results are decidedly more subtle, and thus, nobody notices. But is this really the best-kept secret nobody is talking about? To find out the truth, we tapped plastic surgery experts to answer all of our questions about the celebrity procedure.

Experts Featured in This Article

Grace Lee Peng, MD, FACS, is a young physician representative for the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

Sam Rizk, MD, FACS, is a facial plastic surgeon based in New York.

Jennifer Levine, MD, is a facial plastic surgeon based in New York.

Ilana Brit Mechoullam, RN, AGNP, is a registered nurse based in Florida.

What Is a Baby Facelift?

First, what exactly *is* a baby facelift? "Oftentimes people use cute names for surgical procedures without really describing what each patient is having done," Grace Lee Peng, MD, FACS, tells PS. "While there is no exact definition for a baby facelift, the term is often used for smaller surgical procedures such as tightening of the jawline, improving the submental (under-chin area) contour, and improving the neckline, with shorter incisions than a traditional facelift and neck lift."

Whether it's being referred to as a baby or mini facelift, the procedure is usually focused on the lower face and neck and comes with a hefty price tag. Depending on your location, prices can range from \$10,000 to \$50,000, but the results are the reason for the high cost.

"Typically speaking, patients can expect to see a more defined jawline, a reduced appearance of jowls, and a softening of the nasolabial folds, which are the lines that run from the sides of the nose to the corners of the mouth," Sam Rizk, MD, FACS, facial plastic surgeon, says. "This procedure can also address loose, sagging skin in the neck area."

They're also popular because they're almost always guaranteed to require less extensive incisions than a regular facelift since the goal is for a more subtle enhancement. A regular facelift, on the other hand, has incisions that "can extend to the hairline or into the hairline, while a baby facelift usually has very small incisions just around the earlobe or behind the ears," Dr. Peng adds.

But are they really on the rise in the celebrity world? According to the experts we asked, the simple answer is yes. "Smaller-scale surgical interventions are always popular amongst celebrities and those in the spotlight because there is less downtime but a definitive improvement and change," Dr. Peng says. Facial plastic surgeon Jennifer Levine, MD, agrees, adding that "most celebrities are constantly doing small tweakments so they look good without looking overdone." In fact, Peng says that celebrities are starting to have procedures done earlier while they're still young because the change is less dramatic and more subtle.

The truth is, there is only so much that can be done with injectables. "Unfortunately, it's not possible to replicate the effects of a full-on facelift using just Botox," Ilana Brit Mechoullam, RN, AGNP, says. "Botox can create the appearance of subtly lifted features and minimize lines, and when used in conjunction with filler, can help plump the face and lightly restore certain features, but heavy sagging skin requires surgery to remedy."

We'll leave you with this: the next time you find yourself staring at the mirror, wondering why you can't re-create the look of your favorite celebrity even though you've purchased all of the same products they claim to be using and have memorized their routine exactly — take it from some well-known plastic surgeons: it's not you, it's them. Well, it's *probably* them, combined with the help of a really skilled doctor.

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