

COSMETIC SURGERY & BEAUTY

NEW LOOK

Because Nobody's Perfect

AMBER CHIA

"You're only ugly if you're lazy!"

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A Beautiful Behind

Surgical treatments to boost your bum? You bet your a**! **Dan Childs** talks to Brazilian plastic surgeon Dr. Marco Faria Correa about how new procedures are bringing up the rear here, there and everywhere.

Whether you're shaking it, working it off, getting it in gear, having it kicked or kissed, it's a simple fact that you're probably paying way too much attention to it: Your butt, that is.

Yes, our society is becoming ever more butt-centric with each passing day. And whether you blame J-Lo, Valentino or El Nino, the fact remains that our penchant for rear admiration isn't going away anytime soon.

With this in mind, it should come as little shock that a bevy of butt-beautifying procedures are now available on the medical beauty scene. We chatted with Brazilian surgeon Dr. Marco Faria Correa to find out more about these offerings – as well as the reasons behind the growing public interest in buttock enhancement.

WHY BETTER YOUR BUTT?

Dr. Marco says that an increasing number of patients – both men and women, in fact – come to his clinic interested in harnessing the power of modern medicine to pretty up their posteriors. Why?

Dr. Marco says the answer is simple.

"Because it's very nice," he replies with a laugh. "It is one of the best parts of the anatomy, not only for women but for men as well."

He adds that the appearance of our butts actually gives clues to those around us about our lifestyle, age and fitness level.

"It can show that one takes care of their body," he says. "People who exercise usually have a bottom that is up and firm. So it's easy to see that this is also connected to people who are concerned about their bodies."

A firm, rounded posterior is also a clue to an individual's age. For most, the firm, rounded bottom enjoyed in youth succumbs to the pull of gravity with every passing year. The result is often a flat bottom with sagging folds of skin.

Nowadays, however, there are ways to enhance the buttocks to restore their shape and firmness. Dr. Marco notes that there are several different approaches to achieving this goal, making it possible to offer patients a tailored solution.

YOUR OPTIONS FOR A MORE BEAUTIFUL BEHIND

There's more than one way to a beautiful butt. Dr. Marco describes the methods that are on the operating table today.

1. Bodysculpting with liposuction and fat transfers

Whereas implants used to be the most popular way to enhance the buttocks, Dr. Marco says that fat transfer has become the method of choice for many of his patients. "These days, for every 10 cases I get of gluteal augmentation with fat injection, I'll get only one case of silicone implants."

Dr. Marco explains that the fat used for transfer into the buttocks is normally removed through liposuction from the love handles and the outer leg.



Dr. Marco

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In fact, as Dr. Marco notes, sometimes a bit of lipo is all that is needed to improve the appearance of the buttocks.

"A patient might not need fat injections at all," he says. "She might only have a square appearance because she has big hips. So, just by removing some of the fat, we can achieve a nice shape."

If needed, the fat that has been removed can be injected into the buttocks to add shape and volume. Dr. Marco notes that the fat is injected into the gluteus in "tunnels" that wind through many different depths. This, he says, helps a lot in terms of shaping.

"We will normally inject between 300 to 500cc in each gluteus," he says. "One litre of fat is the most that we will inject in one sitting."

In the weeks and months following the

procedure, about 30 to 40 per cent of the fat that has been injected into the buttocks will be reabsorbed. However, Dr. Marco says that the fat that remains will be a permanent addition – and repeat procedures can always be performed in order to add even more volume and shape.

Other fillers such as hyaluronic acid are also on the market, but are not recommended by the International Society of Plastic Surgeons for this purpose.

2. Implants – adding significant volume

Some patients who want more prominent buttocks simply don't have the extra fat to be harvested. For these patients, Dr. Marco says, gluteal implants are the natural choice.

"There are some cases where the butt is

"THE ABDOMEN AND THE BUTTOCKS ARE TWO AREAS THAT REALLY ATTRACT ATTENTION. WHY DO YOU ALWAYS TURN YOUR FACE TO SEE A GIRL WITH A NICE BODY AS SHE PASSES? IT IS TO LOOK AT HER BUTTOCKS. I DON'T KNOW; IT IS HARD FOR ME TO EXPLAIN." – DR. MARCO FARIA CORREA

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The Ideal Derriere

They say variety is the spice of life, and if you ask three different people about their ideas of the perfect bum, you're likely to get three different answers. Dr. Marco says that our perceptions of posterior perfection can even be culturally based.

"I can comment that there is a bit of difference in culture and race when it comes to shape," he says. "If you see Africans, their ideal tends to be buttocks enhanced by big hips and outer thigh projection. In England, on the other hand, the preference is a child-like shape, which is flat, small, pert and round. They seem to like it a bit flat. But nowadays, the most popular shape seems to be that of the Brazilian bum-bum."

The demand for a Brazilian-type bum has made this procedure a common order for many of Brazil's surgeons. "We do a lot of body shaping in Brazil, and this is one of the main parts we deal with," Dr. Marco notes. "There are breasts, there's the stomach, and then there's the glutes."

Though tastes may vary, there are a few general characteristics that define the ideal backside for most people. The preference tends to be toward a round shape without any drooping or sagging. There should be no fold of flab below the buttock (commonly referred to as a "banana fold"), and there should be a smooth line from the gluteus muscle to the thigh. There should be a slight hollow on the side, and a prominent V shape at the tailbone where the buttocks meet is often prized.

Traditionally, Dr. Marco says, the way to achieve this ideal shape has been through long hours at the gym.

"Basically, if people want to work out, they can achieve a strong muscle with nice roundness," he says. "Of course, not everyone works out, but they still want this look. So this is where surgeons can help."

so flat that we use a silicone implant," he says. "There are actually two types of these implants. The first kind is a non-gel implant which is solid, but soft. The other variety is a bag with gel inside, which is similar to a breast implant in form and function. This one, in my opinion, is nicer, and in Brazil we use this one more."

The implant is usually inserted through a 4.5cm incision made in the cleft between the buttocks. Due to this positioning, the resulting scar will not be visible.

Dr. Marco adds that different shapes (round and oval) and textured or non-textured options give surgeons the ability to customise the procedure to each particular patient. Plus, the location in the buttock where the implant is inserted can also make a difference in the end result.

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"There are three locations into which you can insert the implant," Dr. Marco explains. "The first is under the muscle, which is a technique that has been used ever since the 70s. The second is subcutaneous, which is just under the skin. But this tends to move and extrude, so it's not so nice. The third is to go inside the muscle. Doctors go under the fascia, so it's not completely below the muscle but it's deeper than subcutaneous."

Without a doubt, buttock implants will certainly add volume. However, Dr. Marco notes that most of the gains will be in the upper pole of the buttocks. Augmentation of the lower pole, then, depends more on whether the patient opts for a fat transfer as well.

3. Surgical lift - getting rid of flabby skin

According to Dr. Marco, there is another procedure used to lift the bottoms of obese people who have severe skin redundancy. The idea is a bit like a tummy tuck for the back; an incision is made around the upper contour of the buttocks and across the lower back. This slice of skin is removed, and the edges are stitched together to give a tighter, lifted result. A separate surgical procedure involves cutting and stitching of the sub-gluteal region - that is, those folds of flabby skin directly under the buttocks.

While these techniques may be effective, however, Dr. Marco says that there are drawbacks.

"The scars after these procedures used to be quite visible," he says. "In very severe cases today, these techniques can still be used. But of course, if you are interested in

"THE PATIENTS DON'T COMPLAIN THAT MUCH ABOUT PAIN. THEY DO FEEL A BIT SORE, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, THEY LOVE TO SEE THAT THEIR BUTTOCKS ARE UP AND FULL." - DR. MARCO FARIA CORREA

a cosmetically pleasing, beautiful outcome, you must be able to hide the scars. The scar will always be there, but you just don't want to show it if possible."

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS AND RECOVERY

Though the procedures involved in buttock augmentation are safe when performed by a well-trained surgeon, there are potential side effects that can accompany the surgeries. With fat injections, Dr. Marco says that where you inject is of crucial importance when it comes to safety.

"The surgeon must be particularly aware of the anatomy of the area so as to not compress the sciatic nerve," he cautions. "Doing so could cause pain in the legs."

He adds that surgeons must also be careful when performing deep injections. "If the doctor is doing fat injections, he must be careful when injecting into the deep layers to make sure that there isn't any injection made into any big vein," he says. "If you inject into the vein, you will get a fat embolism."

As far as implants are concerned, possible side effects stem from trauma to surrounding tissues, as well as the location of the incision.

"One of the possible complications of gluteal implants is liquid formation," Dr. Marco says. "This happens if the trauma to the surrounding area is too much. You can also get infection, because you are working very near to the anus. A surgeon can prevent this, however, by suturing properly and prescribing antibiotics."

Of course, as with any other surgical solution to beauty, even the most expertly performed procedures entail at least some downtime. Dr. Marco says that recovery from buttock augmentation, particularly

when an implant is inserted within or beneath the muscle, can prove to be a pain in the butt.

"When you go into the gluteus, inside the muscle or under, you will get more recovery pain," he says. "This is because if you go under the muscle, you will be going near the sciatic nerve."

This proximity to this sensitive stretch of nerve fibre can result in a bit of lingering pain for the first couple of weeks after surgery. But, as Dr. Marco notes, "The patients don't complain that much about pain. They do feel a bit sore, but at the same time, they love to see that their buttocks are up and full."

THE BOTTOM(!) LINE

As most who are interested in boosting their behinds will soon find out, enhancing the buttocks is not an inexpensive proposition. Dr. Marco says that in his Singapore practice, buttock implant surgery ranges from S\$20,000 (RM46,800) to S\$30,000 (RM70,200). The price tag of a fat transfer procedure is largely dependent on the extent of the liposuction needed, and total costs can run from S\$15,000 (RM35,100) to S\$30,000 (RM70,200).

It's a pretty price to pay for a shapelier posterior. But for many, perhaps, having a shapely, perfect derriere is a priceless prospect - no butts about it! **ASAP**

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