



# *Labiaplasty*

PATIENT INFORMATION

# What is a *labiaplasty?*

*To many women, discussing their private parts can be a very sensitive topic. However, labiaplasty surgery is increasing in popularity and women talk about it more and more.*

Labiaplasty surgery (also referred to as labial reduction) has been performed in Australia since the 1980's and is designed to reduce the size or to reshape the labia minora of the vagina (inner lips) or the labia majora (outer lips).

It is not uncommon for women to feel unhappy with the appearance and structure of their vagina, especially if the labia minora are asymmetrical or particularly long. Protruding labia minora can have adverse effects on women's day-to-day life and personal relationships. In these instances, a labia reduction treatment to resculpt the labia minora may be beneficial.

## ***What is the difference between a labiaplasty and vaginal tightening?***

Labiaplasty surgery is not the same thing as vaginal tightening. Vaginal tightening is usually performed by a gynaecologist and is performed to stimulate the inside of the vagina whereas labiaplasty surgery targets the outside of the vagina and most commonly involves the labia minora (less commonly, a labiaplasty involves the labia majora and clitoral hood).



# Why are women having this procedure?

*A labiaplasty surgery is performed to reduce the size of the labia and reshape the labia. For some patients, this is a cosmetic choice, and for others, this surgery is performed to improve personal comfort.*

Women may be embarrassed by the appearance of their genitalia, and these days, with nothing except airbrushed magazines as a reference, women can easily become confused as to what normal labia constitute. It's so important for women to understand that all shapes of labia are normal, no two women are the same, and every woman's intimate area is different.

For some women the appearance of the labia minora can cause concerns especially if they are large, hanging out, out of proportion, uneven or discoloured. Discomfort can arise when the inner labia protrude outside the outer labia as this can cause rubbing, chafing, pain and swelling. Often women with large labia minora feel discomfort during exercise, bike riding, horse riding, or when wearing tight clothing. Sexual activities can also become painful, particularly if the labia minora roll or fold into the vagina.

## **Women who consider labiaplasty typically experience:**

- Embarrassment or aesthetic concerns
- Pain or chafing with activity, sport, bike riding, running
- Pain or chronic swelling during sexual intercourse
- Pain wearing tight clothing
- Poor hygiene/chronic infection

Feeling unattractive or concerned regarding this part of the body can cause a great deal of psychological embarrassment and poor self-esteem which has very wide-reaching personal and social ramifications. It is very important to understand that there is a wide range of "normal" and that no two people are the same. For the right patient, labiaplasty, or labia reduction surgery, is an operation with results that can last a lifetime.



# Who's having a *labiaplasty*?

*Women who come to see Dr Paterson have thought about having this procedure done for a very long time. It's not something they rush into or take lightly.*

Large or asymmetrical labia minora (inner lips) which result in protrusion cause women discomfort. The most common concerns of women requesting labiaplasty are:

- Childbirth distortion
- Painful intercourse
- Discomfort during exercise
- Feelings of self-consciousness or embarrassment
- Discomfort caused by protruding labia rubbing on clothing

Most women have a combination of concerns—they have concerns about physical discomfort and concerns about their appearance. The discomfort is usually constant, with daily rubbing and chafing made worse during certain activities such as running, bike riding or wearing certain underwear or tight clothing. Some women feel discomfort even just sitting and need to manually readjust their labia throughout the day to avoid anything causing rubbing.

All of these constant daily problems over the course of months and years can result in feelings of 'not being normal', being embarrassed by their bodies and ultimately leading to debilitating, very real, poor self-esteem.

Some women experience discomfort during sex, as the labia minora get in the way during intercourse causing friction and painful swelling afterward. Many women have had sexual partners comment that their lips are large. This in particular can cause young women to feel inadequate and can lead to avoidance of sex and long-term sexual inhibition.

*If you are seeking surgery for cosmetic reasons, it's important that your surgeon takes your mentality towards the procedure into consideration. This is important as if you are experiencing depression, anxiety or significant angst, you may benefit from other avenues of treatment before considering surgery.*



# What is the process like?

*Dr Paterson performs the labiaplasty procedure in an accredited hospital under sterile conditions and a full general anaesthetic.*

## **The process:**

### **Step 1: Make an appointment**

Phone or email for a confidential appointment with Dr Jane at our Melbourne practice.

### **Step 2: Your consultation**

- Patient questionnaire
- Medical considerations
- Clinical photography
- Surgical plan/discussion
- View before and after photos
- Full costing and scheduling information

### **Step 3: Book your surgery date**

### **Step 4: Postoperative reviews**

- At one and six weeks
- Post-operative clinical photography

As this is a very sensitive area of the body you can imagine, the procedure and recovery can be quite painful. Bruising and swelling can be fairly dramatic for the first two weeks and ice packs, rest and salt baths are essential during the first week following surgery. It will take roughly six weeks for the body to heal, sutures to dissolve and swelling to resolve.

This is an operation with a very high patient satisfaction rate. For many women having had this surgery, their lives are better and problems are solved. It affects all of their life. How they feel about themselves, their sense of what it is to be a woman and how they relate to others. It's a big deal. It is life changing surgery. For many women, "it's the best thing I ever did."

*"I am a female plastic surgeon, specialising in female cosmetic surgery procedures, providing plastic surgery for women only. When you come to see me (your surgeon, not an assistant or nurse) I will talk to you and listen. I will examine you and we will talk about your options. I will show you a full photo album of before and after photos. You will see enormous variation among women and understand that no two women are the same; most women are not even the same from side to side."*

Postoperative care is very important, and most women require a week off work. Patients are reviewed by Dr Jane at one week postoperatively and then again at six weeks. While this procedure has a very high patient satisfaction rate if done for the right reasons, it's important to remember that this area of the body bruises and swells considerably and it will take a minimum of six weeks to see the final result.



# *Dr Jane Paterson*

For your convenience, Dr Jane Paterson welcomes prospective patients to schedule a private consultation. During this appointment, you and Dr Paterson will discuss all your options. You will be fully informed of the potential risks and limitations, as well as all costs of the procedure including the cost of your specialist anaesthetist, the fully accredited Melbourne hospital, and all of your postoperative care and appointments.

At her state-of-the-art practice in Richmond Melbourne, Dr Jane Paterson has had extensive experience in labiaplasty surgery for women who want to reduce the labia to a more comfortable size, while ensuring a more youthful vaginal appearance.

## ***Understanding your priorities as a woman***

Dr Paterson is a female plastic surgeon and has long understood the fascination and interest that women have in altering the appearance of the vagina. From when she first began her career in surgery she has known that she wanted to help female patients address their concerns and provide an understanding and professional opinion on the subject.

Dr Paterson aims to create a place of comfort at her practice for her patients to speak about their concerns and get the information they need without feeling uncomfortable or judged.

*Always consult with a professional*

*It's important to visit a surgeon that you feel comfortable with and who is compassionate*



Before  
*and after*





*Dr. Jane Paterson*

COSMETIC PLASTIC SURGEON

## *Contact Us*

*For more information on any of these procedures please contact the Jane Paterson team on 03 9429 3343 or visit our website below:*

*[drjanepaterson.com.au](http://drjanepaterson.com.au)*

### Disclaimer

Individual results may vary. Surgery and all health regulated services carry risks which need to be discussed with your doctor. It is always recommended to seek a second opinion.