

Reduction Neck Lift

The Importance of the Deep Structures of the Neck to the Successful Neck Lift



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KEYWORDS

- Neck lift • Face lift • Facial rejuvenation • Cervicofacial rejuvenation • Jawline definition
- Submental fat • Submandibular gland • Parotid gland

KEY POINTS

- Patients seeking enhancement in jawline definition who present with marked fullness in the submandibular region are best managed through reduction of the deep structures of the neck.
- Facial aging is often associated with perifacial expansion and fullness in the submandibular region.
- Enlarged major salivary glands are common in patients with submandibular fullness and may be responsible for most of the volume laterally and posteriorly.
- The dynamic anatomy of the neck must be considered when planning and evaluating neck lift and facial rejuvenation procedures in order to achieve natural results.
- A thorough analysis of the surface anatomy and features of the young and attractive neck and jawline is essential in order to obtain successful neck lift results.



Video content accompanies this article at <http://www.plasticsurgery.theclinics.com/>.

INTRODUCTION

With the growth of nonsurgical or minimally invasive procedures for facial rejuvenation such as neuromodulators, fillers, and skin resurfacing techniques, the neck has gained added attention recently, because an increasing number of patients are seeking solutions in this area that might enhance and complement those obtained in the face.¹

Despite efforts to achieve adequate results in the neck and jawline nonsurgically,² surgery is often the best option in order to obtain long-lasting and both evident and natural outcomes. Physicians looking to modify the anatomy of this region surgically should plan the procedure

carefully in order to provide their patients with a technique that meets their expectations, as they will frequently be required to deliver added results to those obtained by other professionals offering nonsurgical options.³

The jawline and neck are important features relevant to both perceived age and attractiveness and are also very significant to the perceived body weight of individuals. In a recent study,⁴ participants considered subjects with a young perifacial anatomy, despite having a more aged centofacial appearance, as looking younger than vice versa. Women also consider their jawline as their most disliked feature as they age.⁵ Patients have a lower threshold for desire for surgery compared with clinicians with respect to their desired

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submental-cervical angle (110° vs 125° , respectively) and consider an attractive submental-cervical angle to be between 90° and 105° ,⁶ which corroborates the notion that a slim neck without submental fullness is considered a sign not only of youth but also of beauty.

Achieving harmony and balance between the face and the neck is crucial in order to obtain natural-appearing results in cervicofacial rejuvenation procedures. Patients are often undertreated in the neck area.¹ Not providing patients with an adequate solution for their neck deformity while only managing their face may result in an awkward operated look, such as the overdone-face underdone-neck deformity, which is often evident when patients look down in profile view, referred to as the Connell view.⁷

Surgeons committed to providing results in facial rejuvenation must be diligent in the techniques that may best improve the neck and submental region in order to provide their patients with balanced and natural outcomes before undertaking any isolated facial procedures at all.

INDICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF DEEP STRUCTURES

Patients with considerable amounts of submandibular fullness are generally good candidates for management of the deep structures of the neck. Any palpable mass or rapid increase in soft tissue volume around the neck should first be carefully studied in order to discard neoplastic or other pathologic origins. Several other factors, however, may contribute to patients developing fullness in

their cervical region, and surgical intervention may prove valuable in improving this condition.

Weight Gain

Weight gain often results in an increase of volume around the cervical region due to fat accumulation in both the superficial and deep compartments of the neck. Furthermore, fatty deposition in the salivary glands may also contribute to volume increase in the submental area and produce cervical fullness and bulging in the overweight patient.⁸ Although there may be differences among men and women in their tendency to accumulate fat around the neck with weight gain, as well as in the location where this cervical fat accumulation is more prevalent, studies have shown that a substantial amount of the fat found in the neck lies in the deep subplatysmal space.^{9,10}

It should be noted that patients may present with submandibular and neck fullness and not be overweight. These individuals often have had heavy, thick necks starting at a young age, due to hereditary factors, and complain that their neck conveys them an overweight appearance despite having an adequate body mass index.

Aging

Although many individuals demonstrate a marked cervicofacial thinning and volume loss with aging (type I facial aging) (Fig. 1), most persons will experience some degree, if not a profound, volume augmentation around the jawline and neck, with a predominant perifacial expansion (type II



Fig. 1. (left) Type I facial aging with predominant facial thinning and volume loss. (right) Result after a face and neck lift procedure through a lateral approach only, without opening the neck.

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