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What The Emerging “Ballet Body” Craze Says About Current Plastic Surgery Aesthetics

Elise Tabin | July 3, 2024



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From ballet flats to bubble hems, drop waists, and even muted pastel palettes, balletcore has been one of the biggest fashion trends of the past year. So, it is no surprise that the ballet-inspired look has influenced beauty aesthetics, including those within plastic surgeons’ offices. The ballet body leans more towards a natural, fit, and athletic-looking physique than the exaggerated, larger-than-life augmented body parts that have led the industry in the last decade. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) 2023 Statistics Report, the “ballet body” trend echoes the characteristics of a proportionate and elegant physique seen in ballet dancers, demonstrating the shift in preference to more subtle cosmetic enhancements.

So, what’s the driving force behind a more svelte silhouette over a curvier one? [Dr. Steven Williams, M.D.](#), a San Francisco-based board-certified plastic surgeon and president of the ASPS, thinks the ballet body look is fueled partly by the uptick in accessible weight loss medications like Ozempic and Mounjaro, plus aesthetic trends fading over time and new ones emerging. “The GLP-1 agonist medications have dramatically changed the weight loss landscape. The power of these drugs may be unmasking patients’ underlying desire for a more sleek-looking body,” he says.

Dramatic weight loss can also come with side effects like loose skin, or make previous procedures, like breast implants, look disproportionate to one's new shape. Just like the popular "mommy makeover" that addresses pregnancy body changes, the "ballet body" is an amalgam of several surgeries that comprise the complete package.

But whether it's a pendulum shift on the "what-everyone-wants-to-look-like-right-now" plastic surgery scale or the increase in weight loss via medication, one thing is certain: there's been another cultural shift in body ideals. Ahead, TZR dives deep into the "ballet body" trend, including all it entails and the possible risks.



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What Is The "Ballet Body"?

Plastic surgery trends continually come and go, and the "ballet body" is, according to Williams, the return to a slimmer profile. "Typically, a ballet dancer's body has subtle curves and more of an elongated form," he says. Patients seem to be gravitating towards this ideal, contrasting plastic surgery procedures that have been popular for the last five years, which were designed to emphasize curves."

Dr. Melissa Doft, a board-certified plastic surgeon in New York City, says that the characteristics of the "ballet body" trend are a thin, fit body with small breasts and a small buttock. Popular amongst women ages 20 to those well into their 50s and 60s, the "ballet body" embraces holistically balanced features. "Previous body aesthetic trends, like the Brazilian butt lift (BBL), celebrated a woman's curves and often exaggerated them, whereas the ballet body is exactly the opposite."

Why The "Ballet Body" Is Trending

A side-effect of rapid weight loss is often the desire to improve upon body parts that may need a little boost, lift, or tightening to create a better-balanced body. "When there is rapid weight

loss, there is also an uptick in breast lifts and abdominoplasties (as well as facelifts and neck lifts) because loose skin often results from weight loss medications,” Doft shares.

According to Doft, there has also been an enormous shift towards smaller breasts since COVID. “Women are not as interested in voluptuous breasts as they are in the idea of not needing to wear a bra. Furthermore, liposuction has increased in popularity to slim the body, leading to a trimmer, fitter physique.”



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What The “Ballet Body” Entails

The complementary procedures that make up the ballet body include breast augmentation with small implants or fat transfer, breast lift, liposuction, and skin excision and tightening, with the overall goal of creating a more symmetrical and harmonious-looking body. “We are addressing the breasts, trunk, arms, and legs so that females can achieve the lithe silhouette they seek,” Doft says.

Natural-Looking, Smaller Breasts

As mentioned before, breast augmentations with natural-looking results are in more demand than ever, and a smaller cup size is the cornerstone of the ballet body. “Breast augmentation continues to be one of the most popular plastic surgeries performed,” Williams adds. According to ASPS, in 2023, breast augmentations accounted for 304,181 procedures, a 2% increase from the previous year. While there’s no direct data on the size of implants these patients are getting, the boost in procedures aligns with the focus on this area of the body.

More recently, Doft says she’s had so many women seeking small “ballerina” breasts, which plastic surgeons can achieve in several ways. “Women are more interested in smaller breasts now, and they make it easier to enjoy a more active lifestyle,” she shares. “Small breasts also lead

to less back pain and discomfort. They also make many women look thinner and less matronly.”

Either a breast augmentation with small breast implants or autologous fat grafting (injecting fat issue from other areas of the body into the breasts) can be used to create moderate volume and size. “For a woman who has minimal breast tissue and wants natural-looking enhancement, we can use fat grafting to the breasts or a very small breast implant,” Doft says. Fat grafting produces a much more subtle result than an implant and only about one-half to one-cup size improvement for delicate refinement.

Depending on a woman’s individual anatomy, breast size, and tissue, Doft shares that a breast reduction can reduce larger-sized breasts, as can removing breast implants. The latter can be explanted, swapped out for smaller ones, or downsized with a bit of fat grafting. According to ASPS reports, breast implant removal surgeries also increased by 9% since 2023.

Similarly, breast lifts are also part of the plan for a ballet body, especially when changes to the breasts are due to weight loss. The surgery can lift, elevate, and reshape the breasts, either with or without changing their size. In 2023, ASPS reports that over 153,000 breast lifts were performed, denoting a 7% rise year-over-year in following suit for a more natural-looking breast.



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Improved Overall Contour With Less Fat

A tight core, flat stomach, trim midsection, and slim thighs and arms are commensurate with a “ballet body.” Liposuction, the gold standard for effective stubborn fat removal, especially when sculpting the arms, legs, and trunk, increased by 7% from 2022 to 2023 and remained the most in-demand procedure in 2023, according to ASPS. “Liposuction can change a person’s silhouette by reducing central fat, narrowing the hips, and thinning the thighs and upper arms,” Doft says. It can also be the finishing touch to contour specific body parts even at your ideal weight.

Skin Tightening

Losing extra weight via semaglutide and other weight-loss medications is one thing; getting rid

of the loose skin it leaves behind is another, and that's where skin tightening procedures, both surgical and nonsurgical, come into play. To create more of a dancer's silhouette, which naturally boasts tight, firm skin, the demand for procedures that improve the skin's appearance continues to be in demand. As Doft explains, the ever-popular tummy tuck removes excess skin and tightens the core muscles, much like a ballet dancer's, and was also on the up and up by 5% last year. "After substantial weight loss, patients are interested in tightening that skin and looking better at their new weight," she adds.

Non-Invasive Treatments

Surgery isn't the only way to get a ballet body. Non-invasive and minimally invasive body sculpting treatments like radiofrequency-based skin tightening, injectable fillers, and nonsurgical fat reduction have a place within the trend. For some, cosmetic surgery isn't an option, but nonsurgical treatments, which usually come with minimal or no downtime, are. "It is possible to use something like CoolSculpting to get a 'ballet body,' but personally, I always prefer liposuction over a non-invasive treatment," Doft says. The latter can remove larger areas of fat.

The Bottom Line

Natural and subtle is a commonly desired plastic surgery outcome, and Williams doesn't see the "ballet body" trend slowing down soon. "People are just beginning to feel the effects of semaglutide, and as more patients have access to these medications and see greater results, it will reinforce the trend." With a shift from exaggerated to more balanced curves, women will likely continue to opt for the "ballet body" aesthetic. Doft adds that a lean silhouette has always been and will be popular in plastic surgery. And at the end of the day, improved self-confidence is what plastic surgery is all about.

<https://www.thezoereport.com/beauty/ballet-body-plastic-surgery-aesthetic>