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GLP-1s Are Influencing the Facial Work People Want

The popularity of GLP-1s is shifting facial aesthetic trends. Plus, a fast-food chain that's gone full MAGA and back-to-school morning routines.



By Sara Ashley O'Brien

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Happy Friday!

This week, my colleague Chavie Lieber and I published an article about how facial filler has fallen out of favor. The filler look—characterized by overly plump lips and pillowy cheeks—is losing appeal. It's partly because people are shrinking due to GLP-1s, so their features, too, must scale to size.

One day after our article came out, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons released its annual report with statistics showing cosmetic-procedure trends in 2025. Notably, 82% of the organization's member surgeons reported receiving consultation requests related to GLP-1 use in 2025. Of all cosmetic procedures tracked, one saw the most growth year-over-year: facial fat grafting.

Facial fat grafting, up 39% in 2025 compared with the year prior, involves removing fat from elsewhere in the body, such as the stomach, via liposuction and then having it injected into the face. The idea is to rejuvenate and restore lost volume, which might come as a result of weight loss. “Ozempic Face” isn’t what most people are going for when they start taking these medications. The desired outcome is a more naturally filled out look.

“People want to look as good as they feel,” ASPS president Dr. Bob Basu, a plastic surgeon in Houston, told me this week. “People want to look refreshed, but they want to look like an authentic version of themselves, and I think that’s where fat comes into play.”

ASPS said it no longer reports the costs of procedures because they’re variable, fluctuating by many factors including geographic location or a surgeon’s expertise. In 2024, the organization said the price for the surgeon’s fee for facial fat grafting was between \$3,000 and \$5,500, which doesn’t include additional costs for things like anesthesia, operating room facility fees and other fees.

Dr. Kelly Killeen, an ASPS member and plastic surgeon at the Practice Healthcare in Beverly Hills, told me facial fat grafting can even sometimes be done in the office, depending on how much fat is being placed and any other procedures involved. She said it could run from as little as \$4,000 up to more than \$20,000, with add-ons like skin-tightening procedures.

What struck me during my conversation with Killeen was when she shared a major drawback of the wild, wild west of GLP-1s. Many people are taking them with little, if any, doctor oversight, either getting the medication from telehealth companies or online sellers who don’t require prescriptions at all. When it comes time to preoperative consultations, she’s found some patients aren’t fit for surgery.

“We have to be really careful as clinicians to make sure that they’re healthy and safe for surgery,” she said. “It’s really surprising how many patients we see—especially ones that are self-servicing with these medicines—that have things going on that they don’t recognize.”

She said she's had patients find out about previously unknown thyroid disorders and kidney dysfunction during pre-ops. She's also regularly had patients learn about very low protein levels, which she said could be associated with poorer recovery from procedures. All should be treated or managed before someone undergoes surgery, she said.

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