



## More Americans Are Getting Brazilian Butt Lifts

BY MELISSA DAHL

**A**mericans like big butts: The numbers cannot lie. Last year, cosmetic surgeons across the country performed nearly 10,000 buttock augmentations, up from the approximately 8,500 done in 2012, according to new stats from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

Let's put this into context: The numbers for the Brazilian butt lift, as it's nicknamed, still aren't anywhere near the popularity of the most common plastic surgery procedures; nearly 30 times as many breast augmentations were done in that same time period, for just one example. But the new statistics do show a 16 percent increase in butt augmentations from 2012, perhaps a side effect of a nation's ongoing quest to keep up with Kim Kardashian.

"It's just amazing, the numbers," said Dr. Douglas Taranow, a board-certified plastic surgeon in New York City's Upper East Side. "It's with J. Lo, and Beyonce, and everyone else having a great derriere. ... I think people see that and they want to mirror image it."

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Taranow says he started getting requests for Brazilian butt lifts about three and a half years ago; now, it's the second most popular procedure he does. It's still not quite as popular among his patients as liposuction, but it surpassed breast augmentations last year. He says he's lately been doing as many as four or five Brazilian butt lifts in a week, and while it's mostly women, he's had two male patients in the past six months.

"Plastic surgery used to be a reduction specialty; so, when we did nose jobs, we reduced the nose. But now, as we are more sensitive to ethnicity and different body types, we sometimes augment the nose. Well, same thing with the buttocks," said Dr. Robert X. Murphy, Jr., president of ASPS and a plastic surgeon in Bethlehem, Pa.

Cosmetic surgery as an industry continues to grow, according to the report: 15.1 million procedures were done last year, which is up 3 percent since 2012. Those figures took a slight dip in 2009, but have been inching up every year since. And the most interesting findings in this year's report are all about the booty: 30 percent of cosmetic surgeons ASPS surveyed in 2013 said they were doing butt augmentations, compared to 19 percent in 2012. This is the first year the plastic surgery association has included the procedure in its annual statistics.

The particular procedure is "buttock augmentation with fat grafting," which means surgeons liposuction fat from somewhere the patient's got plenty of it — usually the tummy, thighs or hips — and inject it into the tush. This kind of procedure is being used more in many different kinds of cosmetic surgery, including breast augmentation and some reconstructive surgeries.

"Fat is one of the great resources we have in this country," Murphy said. "As a tissue, it's been underappreciated." But he says surgeons prefer it because the fat tissue is pliable, giving the physician more control than they have when working with synthetic materials, and

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after all. Just ... rearranged.

*"You hear all these horror stories about people getting these butt injections that are like, things from Home Depot."*

"It's like, you're taking it from one area, and you're putting it where you need it," said Marissa, a patient of Dr. Taranow's. She's a 39-year-old mother of three who lives in the Bronx and just had a Brazilian butt lift done two weeks ago. (She didn't want to give her last name.) "And it's your own fat; it's not like you're getting some foreign subject in your body. You hear all these horror stories about people getting these butt injections that are like, things from Home

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Depot.”

She’s talking about the horrific case of the fake doctor [arrested in 2011](#) for injecting a woman’s buttocks with a combination of cement, Fix-A-Flat, mineral oil and superglue. But there was also the 28-year-old mother of two [who died last summer](#) after receiving a round of injections meant to enhance her derriere, or the British tourist [who died in 2011](#) after getting silicone injections into her buttocks in Philadelphia. The procedure's increasing popularity means that there are a lot of quacks out there wanting to make a quick buck, and so it’s especially important that patients make sure that they’re in the hands of a board-certified surgeon, Murphy says. The website for the plastic surgery association has a [“find a surgeon”](#) tool patients can use as one way to ensure that their surgeon is properly trained.

Murphy says he’s seen so many terrible, sometimes irreversible, complications happen to people who’ve gone to non-professionals. It may be cosmetic, but, he reminds, “Plastic surgery is still real surgery.”

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The study looked at deaths among civilian workers employed at the

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U.S. Marine Corps base in North Carolina from 1973 to 1985, when water was contaminated with chemicals including benzene and trichloroethylene, and compared them to those of similar workers at Camp Pendleton in California. The Camp Lejeune workers were at higher risk for kidney cancer, leukemia, prostate cancer and rectal cancer, in addition to Parkinson's, according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry report, published Wednesday in the Journal of Environmental Health.

The group previously reported that military personnel were at higher risk for several types of cancer and Lou Gehrig's disease. Not very many people who drank the contaminated water have died yet, so more study will be needed to confirm the risks. The USMC says the drinking water at Camp Lejeune currently meets all government drinking water standards.



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