

MORE WOMEN ARE OPTING FOR PLASTIC SURGERY TO RECLAIM THEIR PRE-BABY BODIES

# THE MOMMIFY MAKEOVER

Story by: BRITTANY KRESS | Photos by: WILL SHILLING

**M**aybe it's scar tissue from a C-section, loss of breast volume from nursing or around-the-belly saggy skin that—despite endless dieting and exercise—won't go away. But the reality is, pregnancy often leaves women with different bodies. And that physical change, whether it's one or all of the above, can sometimes skew a woman's sense of confidence.

Though plastic surgery can pile on a whole new set of perceptions, women are increasingly choosing that option to help reclaim their pre-baby bodies—a trend that some have dubbed “the mommy makeover.”

Such surgeries typically include a combination of a breast lift and full or mini tummy tuck, although some also choose a breast augmentation to make up for sagging, and others opt for liposuction. The work—sometimes done a year or two after a woman gives birth, other times completed after the children are grown and out of the home—usually ranges from \$5,000 to \$15,000.

“I see a few people every week for consults and surgeries,” said Dr. Tim Treece, of Columbus Aesthetic and Plastic Surgery in Upper Arlington and Easton. “They're often

young, reasonably healthy moms, have a high esteem and they have a good body image. They're embarrassed not to have the nice body they've had their whole life.”

The women who opt for the surgeries say it's more about confidence than vanity. “So many people look at it as vain. Which it is vain, but that's not the reason most people have it done,” said Jody Linson, a 46-year-old mother of two who lives in Gahanna and had a breast augmentation and tummy tuck five years ago. “It was about making me feel good about me.”

Linson, who works in Dr.

These women often have high self-esteem and are embarrassed not to have their typically great bodies.



## AMY FISCHER

A 35-year-old mother of two from Powell

### TREATMENT:

Breast augmentation and tummy tuck

AFTER A PAINFUL PROBLEM DURING HER SECOND PREGNANCY, SURGERY RETURNED HER PRE-BABY BODY.

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Anne Taylor's office in Ohio State University's plastic surgery department, talks regularly to women who are nervous about what others will think. She tells them about her experience.

"People do judge," Linson said. "Their eyes go straight to your chest, or they come up with a preconceived notion of what kind of personality you have."

Amy Fischer, a 35-year-old mother of two from Powell, had a breast augmentation and tummy tuck in the fall that resulted in a "pretty drastic" change. She felt like friends and co-workers were jealous when they found out she was having the work done.

"There's a lot of women that, I think, get jealous when they hear other women are having it," Fischer said. "You don't want to tell them, because you know they're going to be envious."

Fischer's second pregnancy had her back in the hospital days after delivery to deal with an unexpected and painful issue: The baby had torn her abdominal muscle wall, and the resulting surgery left her



with a messy scar and no belly button. She said the plastic surgery has given her back her pre-baby body.

Most women don't think about the effect childbearing can have on their bodies, said Dr. Christine Sullivan, who specializes in body recontouring at The Sullivan Centre, a Powell-area plastic surgery

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office she shares with her husband.

"I think we all just need to educate each other," said Sullivan, who gave birth to three children all weighing more than 10 pounds. "Pregnancies change the expansion of your rib cage, your pelvic bones. It changes so many things that we have to take that stress off of ourselves and say, 'We cannot have that body back.'"

However, surgery can often get women close.

The outpatient surgeries usually last a few hours under local anesthesia and leave scars that are hidden by a bathing suit. The recovery time—typically one or two weeks without work or chasing kids and just gradual exposure thereafter—can be especially difficult for a mother with young children.

That's according to Dr. Jeffrey Donaldson of Donaldson Plastic Surgery on Sawmill Road, who did Fischer's surgery. He sees a wide range of women who are interested in "mommy makeover" surgeries, he said, including recent empty-nesters "ready to do something for themselves."

Of course, most surgeons suggest that women work on dieting and exercise before



JESSICA KUCINSKI

A 30-year-old mother of two from Hilliard

**TREATMENT:**  
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scheduling a procedure. "The things that we do work best when people have exhausted their non-surgical options," Treece said. And all caution women to be sure they're done having children before going ahead with the surgery, which

would essentially be undone by another pregnancy.

Jessica Kucinski, who's 30 and lives in Hilliard, had always wanted to get a breast augmentation. After having two sons, she tried to lose weight by taking up pilates

and Latin dancing. But she still didn't feel confident about her body—especially when she thought about the Latin dance competition dresses she'd have to wear if she wanted to compete. So she visited Treece, who performed a tummy tuck, breast lift, breast augmentation and liposuction for her last spring.

"I felt a certain way inside, but I didn't think I looked that way on the outside," she said. "I wanted to look as good as I felt."

And like others, she's happy she made the decision she did.

"To me," she said, "it was worth it."