

'I had a boob job and tummy tuck to feel more confident on my day'



Just a week after getting engaged last summer, Claire Cordell, 33, decided to have cosmetic surgery.

'I was once a size 10 but, after having children, I felt like I had the body of a woman a decade older,' says Claire. 'When my fiancé proposed I was thrilled, but I had this sinking feeling about showing off my body in front of friends and family. Of course my fiancé said he

loved me as I was, but there was no way I was going to get married until I felt better about how I looked.'

Claire made an appointment with Adrian Richards, director of Aurora, a cosmetic clinic in High Wycombe near her home. She booked a tummy tuck and breast augmentation, giving herself six months to recover before her wedding.

It was a decision that Claire did not take lightly. Her surgeon talked her through what would happen to ensure she had realistic expectations. Claire had five kilos of fat and skin removed from her tummy and a breast lift at a cost of £9,000, paid for by her fiancé as a joint birthday and wedding gift.

After four weeks she had healed. Claire is delighted

with the results: 'I'm not going to say it was painless because my body felt very tender afterwards, but I felt I was in good hands and the risks – such as infection – had been explained to me.'

Claire booked her first wedding-dress fitting soon afterwards and couldn't wait to put her dress on. 'I didn't have to worry about wearing a bra in my dress. It felt very tight at the waist but I felt confident posing for pictures on my wedding day. I used to hate having my photo taken but I enjoyed being the centre of attention.'

'My fiancé was over the moon with my new confidence – and ecstatic about my new, firm breasts! It's not just about having a new body but feeling much better about myself and happier as a result.'

'I had teeth veneers and whitening to improve my smile before my wedding'



Claire Fahy, 33, a systems director, had cosmetic dentistry. 'I wanted to be able to smile, not feel I had to keep my lips sealed to cover my crooked teeth,' she says.

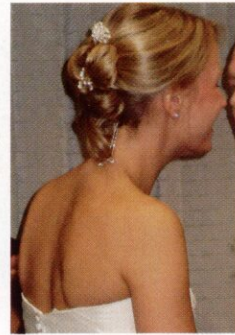
After she got engaged, Claire went to see Dr David Bloom at Watford-based Senova Dental Studios (senovadental.com). After discussing the options, they agreed on 10 veneers for her top teeth (from £750), and whitening for her bottom set (from £299). Firstly a wax model was made to show the desired result. As the veneers were mainly adding to the surface of her teeth, only minor reshaping was needed. She wore temporary veneers to check the final look before the custom-made veneers were attached. Overall, the treatment took four hours. 'It was pain-free

and I was so emotional about it afterwards that I couldn't stop smiling!' says Claire.

Looking at her wedding pictures now, she believes it was money well spent. 'I had dreaded the wedding and being asked to smile for pictures. But, because of my treatment, the pictures are amazing,' she says. 'My family and fiancé were thrilled to see me looking so confident.'

In fact, for Claire the effects went far beyond the wedding day. As part of her job, Claire often has to give presentations and had felt insecure about smiling. After her treatment, she noticed a new-found confidence. 'I decided to apply for my dream job. I felt really positive in the interview. I was then promoted, so a decision that I took for my wedding day has resulted in my career taking off too. Now I'm happier than ever.'

'I had my moles removed so I could wear my hair up'



After Gemma Harrison, 30, a financial PA from High Wycombe, got engaged last year, she found her dream dress by Pronovias. 'It was perfect – very classic,

feminine and strapless. It left my shoulders and back bare and I planned to wear my hair up to show off my neck,' she says. 'But one thing let me down. My back, chest, shoulders and arms were covered in big, brown moles. I'd been paranoid about them for years and often wore my long hair down to cover them. But I didn't want to feel I had to hide on my wedding day, I wanted to feel confident and proud.'

Her fiancé found her decision 'drastic' and her mum thought she was 'mad', but Gemma opted to have 14 large moles removed for her own peace of mind. The cost was £3,000.

'I was treated as a day patient at The Paddocks Hospital in High Wycombe, where I was injected with a numbing substance, which was a bit painful. The procedure only took half an hour and the soreness wore off within days. I was left with scars but they faded and by my wedding they were gone,' she says.

Gemma says she can't put a price on how much better she feels as a result. 'I used to hate showing my shoulders or wearing a bikini, but we booked a beach holiday to Florida for our honeymoon. I have no regrets.' **B**

CONSIDERING SURGERY?

Ask yourself the following questions first

- 1 Is this your choice or has someone talked you into it?
- 2 What are the limitations and risks? No surgeon or procedure is 100 per cent risk-free.
- 3 Is the surgeon or clinic formally recognised? Visit baaps.org.uk to find a qualified surgeon in your area.
- 4 Have you been made to feel obliged to put down a deposit? If the surgery is right for you, there will be no pressure for you to be locked into a contract.
- 5 Are you considering liposuction or a breast enhancement? Have it done at least four months before you buy your dress to allow for any swelling to settle.
- 6 Still unsure? Contact The British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (020 7405 2234) for advice.