

Buccal Fat Removal: Five Checks, One Trade

The five things to settle before cheek reduction surgery, and the five nonsurgical routes Harvard Health names.

✓ **Verified against published guidance** from Cleveland Clinic, Harvard Health & NIH · sources below

Cleveland Clinic says to call your provider right away after surgery for excessive bleeding, signs of infection such as skin hot to the touch, redness, pus or fever, results that are asymmetrical or not healing well, or an abnormal taste in your mouth. Call your provider or 911 for shortness of breath, chest pain or an abnormal heartbeat.

✓ Do This

Check Your Face Shape First

- A narrow face has less to give
- Cleveland Clinic names both
- Buccal fat shrinks with age anyway

COACH'S TIP Narrow faces are poor candidates.

Ask For The Complication Rate

- NIH range is 8.45% to 18%
- Ask the surgeon for their own
- Ask how many they have done

COACH'S TIP A published number exists.

Ask Who Holds The Instrument

- Special plastic surgery training
- See before and after photos
- A licensed plastic surgeon

COACH'S TIP Cleveland Clinic says to ask.

Know What Sits Next Door

- The facial nerve
- Multiple blood vessels
- The parotid duct

COACH'S TIP NIH names all three.

Give It Several Months

- Healing runs about three weeks
- Swelling hides the outcome
- Final result takes months

COACH'S TIP Judge it late, not early.

Try The Nonsurgical List

- Overall fat loss slims the face
- Heat, cooling or injections
- Hydration and eight hours sleep

COACH'S TIP Harvard names five routes.

✗ Do Not

Do Not Call It Minor

- Nerve and duct injury are listed
- 8.45% to 18% complication rate
- So are infection and asymmetry

COACH'S TIP It is real surgery.

Do Not Plan On A Reversal

- The fat pad does not grow back
- Overcorrection is a listed risk
- No filler fix is named

COACH'S TIP There is no undo.

Do Not Judge At Two Weeks

- That is swelling, not shape
- Harvard agrees on months
- Cleveland says several months

COACH'S TIP Early photos mislead.

Do Not Ignore The Age Curve

- Facial fat falls on its own
- Especially after removal
- Hollowing shows up later

COACH'S TIP Harvard names this risk.

Do Not Skip The Portfolio

- Ask for this exact procedure
- Before and after photographs
- Not general facial surgery

COACH'S TIP Cleveland Clinic advises it.

Do Not Expect Spot Reduction

- You cannot target face fat
- Facial exercise evidence is weak
- Diet reduces fat everywhere

COACH'S TIP Harvard is explicit.

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THIS SHEET

Three figures worth knowing

8.45-18% Published complication rate range, NIH

3 weeks Healing time, Cleveland Clinic

8 hrs Sleep Harvard suggests for weight control