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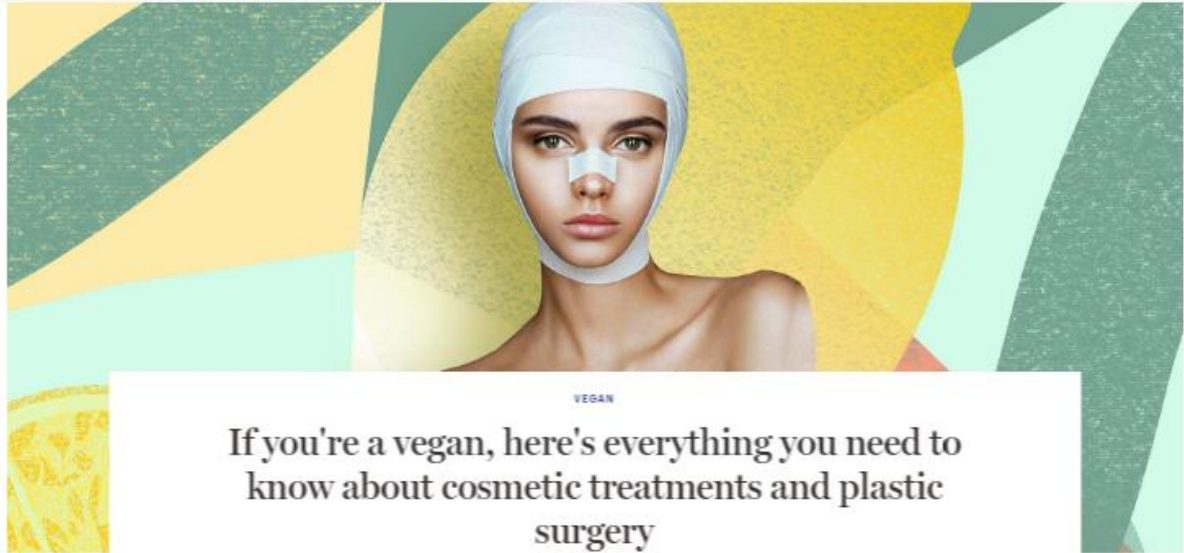


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VEGAN

## If you're a vegan, here's everything you need to know about cosmetic treatments and plastic surgery

Are some of the most popular cosmetic surgery treatments cruelty-free?



BY ANHABELLE SPRANKLEN  
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When it comes to cosmetic surgery treatments, working out whether they're vegan can be more complicated than you think. For instance, Botox, which sees the chemical Botulinumtoxin injected into the skin to paralyse wrinkles, is itself vegan but to ensure its safety it was, at some point, tested on animals.

So, is there really such a thing as vegan-friendly cosmetic surgery? And if so, what treatments are available to vegans looking for a cruelty-free procedure?

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## Botox and Fillers

As most fillers, including lip and derma fillers, are made from non-animal origin hyaluronic acid, they are considered vegan. However, much like Botox, they are required by law to be tested on animals because they're classified as medical products. Pharmaceutical company Allergan, whose products include Botox and Juvederm, have set out to eliminate animal testing by 95% in the next three years.

Leading cosmetic doctor Dr Sarah Shah of Artistry Clinic told us, "If a patient is really keen to have an injectable treatment, I'd recommend Mesotherapy, a series of superficial injections to the middle layer of the skin that administers a tailor-made nourishing cocktail to rejuvenate the complexion. The ingredients injected are antioxidants, amino acids and vitamins, which are already present within the body". However, she warns, "Vegans should do their research for any injectable treatment, as even if they don't contain animal products, they may be tested on animals".

## Facelifts

Facelift procedures are mostly considered vegan because they involve surgical manipulation of the skin - moving and lifting, as well as redistributing fat and tissue. However, as patients will need to go under general anaesthesia, there is no drug currently in use in the UK that is technically fully vegan given that they will have all been tested on animals during development. It is also worth noting that surgeons do increasingly recommend fillers to maintain the effects post surgery which are unlikely to be cruelty-free.

## Lip lifts

The growing surgical trend of lip lifts, known as a permanent alternative to lip fillers, is a vegan-friendly procedure because it, much like a facelift, is a surgical tweak. However, it is performed under anaesthetic so the same problems around animal testing exist.



COSMETIC TREATMENTS

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## Laser resurfacing and body-sculpting treatments

Lasers are considered an excellent vegan-friendly alternative to fillers to reduce the appearance of wrinkles, encouraging collagen regeneration. Tixel lasers can be used on some of the most delicate parts of the face (even up to the lash line) but patients are advised to have numbing cream applied beforehand which may not be vegan (although there are some cruelty-free brands such as Hush who are known for their [vegan tattoo numbing lotions](#)).

Dr Sarah recommends vegans choose a machine-based body-sculpting treatment (Dermalux, Ultrasound treatments, Coolsculpting etc) "as they are predominately LED or temperature based and deliver a collagen-boosting, fat-busting, blemish-fighting, anti-inflammatory end result."

## Breast implants

Silicon or saline, it's highly likely that the contents of most breast implants have been tested on animals in order to check their long-term safety. The casing materials can also be derived of animal by-products. If implants are surgically fitted, vegans would have to be aware of the general anaesthesia involved.