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Permanently luscious lips in 15 minutes

Sarah-Kate Templeton, Health Correspondent

A PLASTIC surgeon has performed the first permanent silicone lip implant operation on a British patient.

The lip implants, made from the same material as breast implants, can be surgically inserted into the lips in just 15 minutes.

Lip enlargement surgery is popular in Britain but until now men and women looking for a more luscious pout have depended on regular injections of gels such as collagen.

Previous permanent lip implants, including those made from Gore-Tex, the material in rainwear, became unpopular after the implants were found to cause unnatural growth in surrounding tissue.

The new implant, called PermaLip, which costs between £2,000 and £2,500, is marketed at patients who want to boost the size of their natural lips or whose lips have become narrow with age.

Patrick Mallucci, a consultant plastic surgeon at London Plastic Surgery Associates, said: "Previously, the materials used in permanent implants could promote tissue ingrowth which can result in a restricted, unnatural smile. So historically surgeons have preferred to use temporary solutions which need regular 'top-ups'.

"The PermaLip implants are soft and malleable, so the look and feel is entirely natural and wouldn't hinder any activity such as kissing or eating."

Surgeons say inserting the implants is a simple operation that can be carried out under local anaesthetic. Two small incisions are made in the corners of the mouth and the implant is passed through a tunnel in the lip. Patients can eat and drink normally the next day.

Last month Pete Burns, the Celebrity Big Brother contestant and Dead or Alive singer, launched a legal action against a surgeon who carried out lip augmentation operations on him.

Burns claims he suffered side effects including swelling, blisters and an inability to eat, drink or speak after receiving a series of injections.

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