



## **How's your Chinny Chin Chin?**

Funny we often do not pay much attention to our chins unless something is hanging off of it, or unless someone happens to point out an offending blemish. But artists and facial plastic surgeons are well aware the importance the chin's position places in overall facial balance. A receded or set back chin causes the allusion of a big or overly prominent nose. Likewise a deficient chin can make the neck look short, heavy and redundant. In medicine and in dentistry there are standard measurements and angles helping us to define the perceived perfect chin position. A quick and easy method is to drop an imaginary line down from your lower lip. Your chin's most projecting feature should ideally meet this line. If it doesn't you may be a candidate for chin augmentation. It is important to also recognize that besides the aesthetic incongruity of a recessed chin, a less than ideal chin position may also be associated with heavy snoring, sleeping difficulties and underlying dental conditions requiring formal evaluation.



The chin's importance to individuality is accentuated in caricature drawings. Artists' renditions of famous stars such as Jay Leno and Jimmy Durante rely on the chin as a defining individualizing feature. Cartoons characters such as Andy Gump and Broom Hilda the Witch clearly represent and are forever linked with their lowest facial

feature. In medicine we have borrowed these characterization helping us to describe patients with the "Andy Gump Syndrome" or the "Witches Chin Deformity." Unfortunately as demonstrated by these characters a disproportionately small chin may be associated with frailty and timidity. Where as a hanging or sagging chin is associated with anger and malicious behavior. In contrast our hero cartoon characters such as Superman and Batman are penned with strong cleft chins

Often patients seeking cosmetic treatments for their face are unaware of the chin's importance to overall facial balance. Perhaps this is because we most often see ourselves straight on through the view of a two-dimensional mirror. A disproportionate chin, although can easily be identified from the side or a three-dimensional glance. Most plastic surgeons today have computer morphing programs that allows altering a patient's picture and demonstrating the importance of the chin's contribution to facial harmony. Assuming there is not an underlying dental or medical condition the plastic surgeon often may suggest improving the outcome from nose or neck surgery by simultaneously augmenting the chin. Although at times just correcting the chin by itself may obviate the desire or need for additional surgery.

If you are confused by others mistakenly assuming you are always angry or acting afraid or if you have difficulties with snoring and bringing your teeth together during chewing take a look at the mirror, mirror on the wall. You may find seeking out a physician who can address your chin's position to be the fairest idea of them all.



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