

# Facial Prosthetics



*“While there are numerous prosthetic technicians in the State of Victoria (Australia) specialising in limb prosthetics and orthotics, only five work in the highly specialised field of Facial Prosthetics.”*

*“Currently three of these specialists are employed at the RMH.”*

The Facial Prosthetics Department at the Royal Melbourne Hospital designs fabricates fits and maintains camouflage Facial Prosthetics as an aid to patients having disfiguring facial deformities. These prostheses allow the patient to fit anonymously into society without having other people notice that they have an abnormality or disability.

This provides a major psychological boost to the patient who may be reluctant to appear in public or introverted and self conscious as a result of their appearance.

A good prosthesis gives these people the confidence to face the

world and go about every day life without feeling that they are being stared at or being made to feel that they are abnormal or less of a human being.

Much of the early work was designed for soldiers returning from World War II with horrific facial injuries. This role was expanded to include not only eyes, ears, and noses but also fingers, toes, breast and other prostheses. Most patients who require prostheses do so as a result of surgery arising from cancers, congenital differences, accidents and trauma. This service is for public and private patients referred by doctors and other health professionals, from within the Melbourne Health network catchment as well as other Victorian health care services and also from interstate and private medical practitioners.

Other services provided include the design and manufacture of specialised dental prosthetics for patients with compromised oral

anatomy, orthognathic dental splints and splints for facial fractures.

More specialised work includes making appliances such as Cranioplasty plates, custom tracheostomy tubes, and patterns for use in bone and tissue grafting procedures, various surgical dilators, gold eyelid weights, as well as the construction of medical teaching models such as skulls, knee joints and other demonstration models.

Some useful web resources for people with Facial Differences are:

**About face**  
[www.aboutface.ca](http://www.aboutface.ca)

**Childrens craniofacial association**  
[www.ccakids.com](http://www.ccakids.com)

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