

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

TODAY



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Your New Year's Resolution: Give to Yourself

The holidays are about giving. You have worked hard to make friends and family feel special and now it is time to focus the attention on yourself. You are long overdue for some rest and rejuvenation. Have you considered pampering yourself with a facelift or finally getting that bump removed from your nose? Take a moment to consider if facial plastic surgery is for you, then make a consultation appointment with your facial plastic surgeon to discuss your treatment options.

Is facial plastic surgery for you?

As we age there are typical changes to your appearance. The skin becomes less resilient and more prone to drooping; fine lines start to appear under and around the eyes; and vertical wrinkles appear around the lips. For those of you that would like to look as young as you feel, there are ways to fight the aging process. The first step is to find a board certified facial plastic surgeon. You may ask a physician, beautician, or friend if they can recommend someone. Schedule a consultation appointment. This is your opportunity to tell how you feel about your features and ask questions about options for change. The surgeon will evaluate your face and discuss what treatments may be available.

What procedures are the most common?

The most popular cosmetic procedures during the winter months are rhinoplasty (nose surgery), blepharoplasty (eye surgery), and facelift.

Patients who seek rhinoplasty usually feel that their nose is not in balance with the rest of their face. It may be too big, too thin, too long, or crooked with a hump. More than half a million people improve the shape of their nose through cosmetic surgery each year.



Do you wish you could eliminate the bags from under your eyes? The upper and lower eyelids become less elastic and begin to sag over time. Fatty tissue begins to slip downward, causing protruding puffy bulges. Blepharoplasty removes excess muscle, fat, and loose skin, creating a more wide-eyed, refreshed look.

Reduce the signs of aging by tightening the drooping skin in the lower part of your face. A facelift involves lifting the skin, moving and securing the underlying connective tissue, removing excess fat and skin, redraping the skin, and then suturing the incisions. The result is smooth skin in the lower two-thirds of the face with more definition in the neck and jaw line.

Whether you are considering a major procedure or a minor treatment regime, your facial plastic surgeon will help you step back and take care of yourself. Ring in the New Year with a new, rejuvenated you! ■

Recent Survey Reveals Increase in Cosmetic Surgery in

People of all ages and ethnic backgrounds are seeking to enhance their appearance through cosmetic surgery. The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery recently surveyed their members and found that in 2001 procedures on Hispanics had increased by 200 percent; African-Americans by 323 percent; and Asians by 340 percent. Where patients thirty years ago had mixed feelings over changes that might reject their ethnic heritage, now, members of minority groups are realizing that facial plastic surgery can refine features, correct disharmonies, and reduce the signs of aging. There is not one standard of beauty, which all persons can be compared; instead, the objective is to look our best – and this transcends cultural and racial boundaries.

Surgeons have noticed among Hispanic patients that lip augmentation and procedures to fight the aging process are trendy. As Stacy explains, “I think that my lips used to be one of my best features when I was younger. I am going to have lip augmentation to enhance them. I want people to look at me and say, ‘Wow, she has

All Are Not Alike

There are innate variances of skin texture and internal support structures among various races. The coloration and texture of skin are important considerations for any type of surgery, resurfacing, or skin peeling. The darker the skin, the greater the chance for the skin to become even darker after the surgery or resurfacing.

Your facial plastic surgeon will take into account your skin type and anatomy and tailor the treatment plan to your needs. The outcome of your procedure may be affected by such factors as the thickness of your skin, the amount of oil it contains, the degree of pigmentation, and the quality of underlying cartilage. No matter what your ethnic background, your physician wants to enhance your esthetics for facial harmony.

Below are some of the identified skin types, each associated with characteristic benefits and challenges related to facial plastic surgery.

great lips!’ I know I am going to feel about 20 years younger after the procedure and I can’t wait.” Typical of all races, the lips thin as we age. There is less definition and the lips appear flat. You and your physician may discuss types of augmentation, temporary or permanent (Bovine collagen, human collagen, Alloderm, autologous implants, Gore-Tex), and decide which is best for you.

Another Hispanic patient, says, “I was hesitant at first to see a facial plastic surgeon because I did not know if my skin type would be a problem. I really wanted to reduce some of the sagging and wrinkling on my face, so I went for a consultation appointment. I was happy to hear I had several choices, and decided on a facelift.” A facelift affects the lower two-thirds of your face. The skin is lifted, and the surgeon repositions and tightens the underlying tissue. Some excess skin and fat may be removed before securing and suturing the skin.

The most popular procedure among African-Americans is rhinoplasty (nose surgery). “I have never been happy with my nose,” says



African-American complexion

Benefits: Signs of aging appear very late; fine wrinkling typically does not occur; skin cancers are very rare; post-operative swelling is minimal. **Challenges:** Formation of keloids is possible; dark or light pigmentation changes may occur; thicker cartilage is not easily adjusted.



Fair, blonde complexion

Benefits: Skin is relatively thin and handles easily; scars tend to be narrow and nearly invisible. **Challenges:** Signs of aging appear early; fine, deep wrinkles may be difficult to remove entirely; initial bruising is more obvious than in darker skinned individuals.



Oily, olive, dark complexion

Benefits: Signs of aging appear later; skin cancers are very rare. **Challenges:** Darker, thicker scars are more common; cartilage tends to droop and is resistant to change; post-operative swelling and oiliness may be prolonged.



Asian complexion

Benefits: Signs of aging appear late; fine wrinkling typically does not occur. **Challenges:** Low nasal bridge may require correction; additional surgical steps are needed to create an eyelid crease.

all Ethnic Groups

Tanya, an African-American woman who recently had surgery to elevate the dorsum (bridge of the nose), narrow the width, and project the tip of her nose. "It was too wide and flat for my face and I was very self-conscious about it. While having a wider nose may be more typical for African-Americans, that doesn't mean that I can't change my nose to make me feel more confident. My nose doesn't define my identity; I'm proud of my heritage." Rhinoplasty means to shape the nose. Upon incision (usually inside the nose), your physician will assess the bone and cartilage structure of the nose and then begin shaping it. Depending on your needs this may mean adding to, taking away, or moving various structures in order to obtain optimal results.

Characteristic of approximately 90 percent of the Asian race, a single eyelid hangs from the brow to the lashes with no eyelid fold. Overhanging upper eyelid skin makes many Asian patients seek surgery. This can provide a more awake look, may ease application of makeup, and can improve upward gaze. The corrective procedure divides the eyelid into two portions, creating a permanent fold, which produces the more open-eyed look. Other common procedures include nasal augmentation, facelifts, and Botox injections.

While the above mentioned procedures are the more common surgeries seen, people of various ethnic backgrounds are having the gamut of treatments to make themselves look and feel great about their appearance. These increasing surgeries on minorities are due to medical advances of techniques and tools; education of possibilities (by the media and by facial plastic surgeons); and affordability of the increasing middle class to expend on procedures.

If you are considering facial plastic surgery, make sure you have realistic expectations. Ask yourself, am I enhancing or excavating? You want to have facial plastic surgery for the right reasons – to increase your confidence and self-esteem not to look like someone else. Remember, there are no aesthetic ideals. Your surgeon can help identify options to balance and enhance your ethnic appearance. ■

ASK THE SURGEON



I am a man in my early fifties who would like to improve the appearance of my skin. I am aware of the thousands of female skincare lines, is there anything specific for men?

There are specialized skin care products just for men. Consult your physician for a specific recommendation for your skin type. These products are designed differently than products for women in that they work to penetrate the thicker skin of a man's face and counteract the daily irritations of shaving, sun, and pollution. Be wary that some products claiming to be for men are merely repackaged versions of the women's line. Your best bet is to get a referral from your physician. ■

HEALTH TIP



Numerous studies have shown that solutions containing 60 to 70 percent alcohol are effective skin disinfectants. While in the home it is preferred that you use soap and water, on the run those gels, foams, and lotions are quite efficient. In a recent study, it was found that fewer germs were spread in a hospital setting when alcohol-based cleansers were placed in each patient room. The advantages to you include:

- ↳ no plumbing or sink required
- ↳ less damaging to the skin than soap (most have added moisture emollients)
- ↳ takes one-fourth the time compared to using soap and water

On the run or not, the cleansers are not preferred for removing excessive dirt or fluids on the hands. ■

WHAT'S NEW?



Medicine ATM machines may be showing up at your physician's office. You have three kids under five years old and the 18-month old needs a prescription for Amoxicillin. After a difficult visit with the doctor, you cart the kids to the pharmacy. The pharmacist isn't sure of the handwriting for the dosage, so after a phone call to the pediatrician for verification and the standard 20-minute wait, your ill child can finally get some medicine and go to bed. Is there an easier way? Yes, a company called InstyMeds is introducing the ATM for commonly prescribed medications. The machine is linked to a palm-sized computer that your doctor operates. The software calculates the right dose based on your weight and prints a voucher to insert into the InstyMeds dispenser. This ensures accuracy, provides convenience, and reduces stress. Look for an ATM in your waiting area. ■

Tattoo Today, Gone Tomorrow

In the past 20 years, the number of tattoo studios has grown from 300 to over 4,000 with an estimated 10 million Americans having at least one tattoo. Some people enjoy their tattoos for life, while about 50 percent later regret their youthful expression. Are you wishing you could remove your ex-boyfriend's name? Allow your facial plastic surgeon to evaluate it and see if you are a good candidate for tattoo removal.

Alternatives for Tattoo Removal

Since tattoos were designed to be permanent, removing them can be difficult. The effectiveness of the removal depends on the depth of the ink and the types and colors of inks used.

Before the 1980s, the options for removal were limited to dermabrasion, excision, and salabrasion. Dermabrasion uses a rotary abrasive tool to sand the layers of the skin off, thus removing the tattoo. For a small tattoo, excision involves removing the tattooed area of skin and then stitching it closed. For a larger tattoo, the skin is removed and a skin graft from another part of the body is used to cover the area. Salabrasion is an age-old procedure where salt water is applied to the surface and a sanding device is used to abrade the area. These alternatives are often painful and prone to scarring. Today, the method of choice is by laser (light amplification by the stimulated emission of radiation).

Understanding Laser Removal

Lasers work by producing short pulses of intense light that pass through the top layers of the skin and are selectively absorbed by the tattoo pigment. This laser energy causes the tattoo pigment to granulate. The body's white blood cells capture the shattered ink particles. The bloodstream carries the



ink-laden cells to the liver and the tattoo eventually fades. The more blood supply to the tattooed area, the quicker it fades. For example, the face has more blood supply and would be able to remove the ink particles quicker than a tattoo on the ankle.

Researchers have determined which wavelengths of light to use for which ink color and how to deliver the laser's output. Three types of lasers frequently used are Ruby, Alexandrite, and Nd: YAG. The technique is called Q-switching, where the laser emits short, high-energy pulses. Another, non-invasive laser is Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) technology. The broad spectrum wavelength allows the physician to select the depth of penetration to fragment

various colors of pigments. Black pigment is easiest to remove. Green and yellow pigments are the hardest. Even after multiple sessions, many tattoos resist complete removal. However, improvement is often greatly appreciated by patients even when some color remains.

Although most patients do not require anesthesia, your facial plastic surgeon may apply a prescription anesthetic cream or inject a local anesthetic into the area before laser therapy. Treatment time is usually limited to a few minutes. There may be some pinpoint bleeding. Following the session, antibacterial ointment and dressing is applied to the area. The skin may feel sunburned and bruised for a couple of days. Cost varies from \$100 per treatment for a small, single-color tattoo with removal in one to two sessions to \$500 per treatment to remove larger, multicolored body art in as many as eight visits.

Tattoo removal has come a long way, allowing patients to take advantage of the latest techniques and technology. See your facial plastic surgeon for an evaluation of the tattoo and the proposed, optimal plan. ■