

# FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

# TODAY

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## Listen to your Facial Plastic Surgeon for Top Five Recommendations

Your facial plastic surgeon wants to provide you with the best possible care and to ensure you are satisfied with your treatment results. Consider the following recommendations to do your part in making your experience a successful one.

### Do your homework

Educate yourself on options; this will help you feel more comfortable and prepared when you meet with your facial plastic surgeon. If you are researching on the Internet, be sure to consult authoritative sources, e.g., your surgeon's Web site and high-quality, academic treatment-center sites. Avoid links that advertisers paid for or product sites that are designed to guide you to a specific treatment. If you find information online that you want to discuss with your surgeon, bring it to your next appointment.

### Be realistic

Prepare for an individualized treatment plan. What works on one celebrity or friend, may not work on everyone. Be open to discuss what treatment is right for you. The best plan is customized to meet your needs and bring about the best possible outcome, taking into consideration your facial features, concerns, and goals.

### Be honest

You may be hesitant to own up to bad habits or sometimes sugar-coat nagging symptoms. This is not necessary; keep in mind that your facial plastic surgeon is your confidential partner in your care. It is important to have all of the information available to help you make smart decisions regarding treatment and procedures. Be open



about tobacco use, alcohol, exercise, nutrition, over-the-counter drugs, herbal products, and vitamins and supplements.

### Take charge of your health

All the medicine and newest technologies in the world cannot compensate for an unhealthy lifestyle. Optimize your health before treatment. Eat healthfully and exercise to get your body into the best shape before your procedure.

This will keep sickness at bay, make recovery smoother, and speed the healing process.

### Follow instructions

The best guidelines are the ones you will actually follow. When discussing your pre- and post-operative instructions with your surgeon, only agree to what you are truly going to do. This will allow your facial plastic surgeon the opportunity to discuss different options or ease your concerns about the recommendations. For example, preoperatively, your instructions may include to quit smoking, arrange for family or friend assistance, fill prescriptions, and discontinue herbal medications. Postoperatively, you will be asked to keep all follow-up appointments, take prescribed medicine as directed, and care for the treated area. Your surgeon will provide additional directions specific to your treatment or procedure—and you should follow them exactly.

You and your facial plastic surgeon are a team. Do your share by being informed, practical, open, responsible, and compliant. The result will be a positive event with optimal care and results. ■

# Complexion Anxiety: How to Smooth Your Worries Away, Options

**W**ith so many options to improve the tone and texture of your face, no one should be apprehensive or self-conscious about his or her appearance. Chemical peels and laser resurfacing are two skin rejuvenation treatments that you may want to consider.

## What is a chemical peel?

A chemical peel is applied to the skin to remove the damaged, outer layers so that new, regenerated skin can replace it. This skin resurfacing procedure is used to treat wrinkles, skin discoloration, and scars.

Your skin has two layers, the epidermis and the dermis. The epidermis is on the surface. Underneath is the dermis, composed of long fibers called collagen that stretch and relax with age and sun damage. The dermis also has two layers, the papillary layer (upper) and the reticular layer (lower). The papillary layer can heal from injuries without scarring.

The active ingredient and concentration will determine how deep the peel permeates. After the damaged layers have been eradicated, the skin works to rebuild the lower collagen and elastin layers of the skin to produce smoother, rejuvenated skin.



## Types of peels

A mild chemical solution, such as alphahydroxy, glycolic, lactic, or salicylic acid, gently peels the epidermis and potentially a portion of the papillary dermis as well. It reduces rough, dry skin and produces fresher, smoother skin. These light peels are not a permanent solution and may be repeated on a regular basis.

A moderate peel, e.g., trichloroacetic acid (TCA), infiltrates the epidermis and into the papillary dermis; the results are longer-lasting than a light solution peel. This peel treats sun damage, fine lines, weathered skin, and pigment problems. The chemical may be applied along with a sedative; there may be mild swelling for about a week. The TCA peel is often repeated over a period of weeks for a smoother, fresher looking skin.

A deep chemical peel, such as carbolic acid (phenol), can reduce extensive wrinkling, marked discoloration, scarring, and pre-cancerous growths. It is the strongest of the chemical solutions and causes a deep peel. The treatment requires sedation; application may take one to two hours. The recovery period is approximately two weeks of redness and mild discomfort.

## What is laser resurfacing?

Laser resurfacing is also a skin rejuvenating treatment to reduce skin irregularities and facial wrinkles. The method directs short, pulsating beams of light to remove the skin, layer by layer. The light beam can be varied in intensity and pulse duration. The wavelength and power output of a particular laser determines how it is applied medically. Your facial plastic surgeon will choose the laser based on what is being treated, skin type and color, and patient expectations.

## Types of lasers

Two types of lasers, ablative and non-ablative, work very differently on your skin. Ablative—which means skin removing—lasers produce an infrared light that heats water within the surface layers of the skin

## Laser treatment options

The following irregularities may be improved through the use of lasers.

- Acne: The laser kills the bacteria that causes it. The laser can also damage the oil glands to reduce oil production. Both methods decrease acne breakouts.
- Acne scars: Removing the top layer allows for a smoother surface to emerge. The more severe the scarring, generally the stronger the laser; repeated treatments may be necessary.
- Fine wrinkles: Crow's feet, lip lines, etc., can be improved through laser resurfacing.
- Pigmented lesions: Age spots, sunspots, and café au lait spots, for example, can be lightened through the use of lasers.
- Hair follicle stimulation: Laser energy on the scalp stimulates the follicles, reducing the progression of hair loss and in some cases increasing hair density of the finer hairs.
- Hair removal: The heat energy from the laser destroys the hair follicle.

## About

(epidermis) causing both the water and the tissue to vaporize. At the same time, the laser heats the underlying skin (dermis), breaking down old collagen and stimulating new collagen to form. New skin that is tighter and smoother forms as the skin heals. This laser can treat more extensive wrinkles and scars, usually with one treatment; however, recovery takes longer.

Nonablative lasers, conversely, have lower energy levels than ablative. The heat of the laser passes through the epidermis with little damage and stimulates collagen production underneath in the dermal layer. The collagen growth may improve skin tone, texture, and fine wrinkles. These lasers usually require multiple treatments—with little or no recovery time—to bring about the desired results. Common nonablative lasers include pulsed dye lasers and nonablative fractional lasers. Treatments with these lasers may be referred to as photo rejuvenation.

Light-based devices, e.g., Intense Pulsed Light (IPL), use flashes of light and are technically not a laser. They are non-invasive and stimulate the dermal tissue to tighten underlying skin and improve skin tone and appearance. Repeated treatments are usually necessary in order to achieve the desired results.

Which treatment is right for you? Make an appointment to have your complexion evaluated; your facial plastic surgeon will discuss your concerns and recommend the optimal plan that is right for you. ■

## ASK THE SURGEON



*I'm 38 years old and the bags under my eyes make me appear older. People tell me all the time that I look exhausted. Is surgery my only option?*

You have several options to improve the area around your eyes. Less invasive solutions include topical treatments, laser resurfacing, chemical peels, and fillers. A more invasive, permanent solution is to remove the extra fat and skin via eyelid surgery (blepharoplasty). Make an appointment with your facial plastic surgeon to review your concerns, options, and budget. Several factors will be considered to determine which rejuvenation treatment or procedure is right for you, including age, skin type, ethnic background, and overall health. ■

## HEALTH TIP



Discuss with your facial plastic surgeon how you can plan for a stress-free experience that will allow your body to respond and recover optimally after your next treatment or surgery.

Research has shown that the more relaxed and comfortable a patient is before surgery, the better his or her convalescence. Your facial plastic surgeon may recommend a few days before surgery or the day of surgery such things as aromatherapy, relaxing music, guided imagery tapes, reflexology, or acupressure. A massage can improve circulation, deepen relaxation, and provide an increased sense of physical and emotional wellbeing. This relaxed state helps minimize the release of epinephrine and cortisone; these hormones increase the body's tendency to swell and bruise. Your surgeon may also recommend these same treatments to relieve pain and promote healing after your procedure. ■

## WHAT'S NEW?



Facial plastic surgeons currently rely on static photographs and visual evaluation to determine the efficacy of cosmetic interventions, such as Botox, Dysport, Xeomin, and facelifts. A recent study used a new, three-dimensional imaging technique to measure whether and how much these treatments improved the patients' appearance. Fourteen subjects were assessed using a dual camera system and three-dimensional optical analysis. White foundation and black speckle makeup were randomly applied to each patient before and two weeks after injection of filler between the eyebrows. A digital camera tracked the movement of the speckles for analysis. The results were represented in before and after treatment heat maps. The system showed color changes that signaled improvement and allowed precise measurement of wrinkle reduction.

This technique could provide objective evidence of which formulation of treatment(s) provide the maximum wrinkle reduction. Also, it may assist facial plastic surgeons in determining optimal dosage for obtaining maximum aesthetic benefit. More studies will need to be performed in order to apply this technology widespread. ■

# Research Shows Positive Social Aspects of Facial Plastic Surgery

When you consider facial rejuvenation, your main goal is to restore youthfulness to your appearance. However, did you know that it also has an impact on how much your peers like and perceive your personality?

Inner and outer beauty converge in a new study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Facial Plastic Surgery*, which suggests certain surgical procedures can actually increase the perception of your likeability, social skills, attractiveness, and femininity.

The study was conducted with 173 participants at the Georgetown University School of Medicine. They were asked to evaluate preoperative and postoperative photographs of 30 women who had facial rejuvenation surgery between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2013. The rejuvenation procedures included facelift, upper blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery), lower blepharoplasty, eyebrow lift, neck lift, and chin implant. The 60 photographs (30 preoperative and 30 postoperative) of these patients were split into six groups, each with five preoperative and five postoperative photographs. The same patient's preoperative and postoperative photographs were not included in any single group to avoid any recall bias. At least 24 individuals rated each photograph for six personality traits (aggressiveness, extroversion, likeability, trustworthiness, risk seeking, and social skills), as well as for attractiveness and femininity. The raters were unaware as to the intent of the study.

The result of the study revealed that of the eight traits evaluated, four traits showed statistically significant improvements: likeability, social skills, attractiveness, and femininity. Trustworthiness showed a slight increase in postoperative photographs, but not enough to be statistically significant. The remaining traits of aggressiveness, extroversion, and risk seeking did not show significant changes.

This proves that facial plastic surgery changes the perception of patients by those around them. Facelifts and lower blepharoplasty were the two procedures that appeared to garner more favorable reviews after surgery. Michael Reilly, MD, professor of otolaryngol-



ogy-head and neck surgery at Georgetown University and lead author of the study comments on the favorable results with facelift surgeries: "If the corners of someone's mouth are turned down at rest, they are not going to be judged to be as likeable or as socially skilled since it appears that they are sad or angry. If the cheeks are full and high, they are going to be perceived as much happier."

Additionally, Stephen S. Park, MD, president of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, states, "The eyes are one of the first things we focus on when interacting with someone, so it makes sense that this facial feature was particularly influential in participants' personality perceptions. Eyes are extremely expressive as our primary way of showing emotion and can have a large impact on resting or neutral facial expression."

According to the AAFPRS annual member survey, facelifts and blepharoplasty were the second and third most requested surgical procedures for women, respectively. Most facial plastic surgeons agreed in the survey that patients seeking eye lift surgery wanted to look less tired.

This study substantiates that not only do patients benefit from personally feeling more confident and self-assured after facial plastic surgery, but also the people around them perceive them more positively—a great, added bonus. ■