

# FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

# TODAY

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## The secret's out...what men would do for a career boost

**W**hile it was once unthinkable for men to admit to having a little work done, that is not the case anymore. An increasing number of male patients are seeking reconstructive and cosmetic facial plastic surgery, currently representing 19 percent of all patients, according to the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS). What motivates men to seek improvement and what procedures are they having?

Men are influenced by their partners' actions. The AAFPRS states that approximately 21 percent of male patients request plastic surgery as a result of their significant other having received plastic surgery. Observing the positive impact the rejuvenation has influences their interest in receiving similar results for themselves. Men also cite that one of their top reasons for cosmetic or reconstructive surgery is to benefit their career; self-improvement and esteem increase competitiveness in the workplace. Men are eager to look and feel younger. Additionally, men want to remain attractive for their spouse.

The most common minimally invasive procedures among male patients in 2013 were Botox (55 percent of procedures) and hyaluronic acid injections (41 percent procedures). Non-surgical procedures are often an excellent option for those who want a subtle change with little down time and less cost. Botox injections weaken the muscles around the eyes and forehead that cause wrinkles.



Results may last four to six months. Hyaluronic acid fillers are injected into the mid to deep dermis for correction of moderate to severe facial wrinkles and folds. The filler adds volume to the skin, smoothing unwanted wrinkles and folds for up to six months. Other popular minimally invasive treatments include microdermabrasion and chemical peels; both treatments remove the outer layers of the skin allowing for new, smooth skin to appear after the healing process. Men are also seeing the benefit of using specialized skin care products that are designed to penetrate the thicker skin of a man's face and counteract the daily irritations of shaving, sun, and pollution.

In 2013, the most common surgical procedures for men were hair restoration and rhinoplasty (nose surgery). Hair restoration is a procedure that may take several sessions to graft hundreds of follicular units-preserving blood vessels and tissue-into the recipient area. Rhinoplasty corrects the appearance and sometimes the function of the nose. These are just two surgical examples that men take advantage of and require planning and recovery time. Other possibilities that men seek are blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery), facelifts, and chin/cheek implantation.

The demand for facial plastic surgery among men is increasing; they want to look younger, improve their overall appearance, and feel better about themselves. If you are interested in a particular treatment or procedure, contact your facial plastic surgeon to discuss what is optimal for you. ■

# Two-by-two, threesome, or in groups: Leaning on your friends for

A recent survey revealed that 31 percent of facial plastic surgeons are seeing an increase in couples having surgery together. Eight percent are seeing an increase in female family members undergoing procedures concurrently. Mothers and daughters, sisters, couples, and girlfriends—the groupings may vary, but the benefits are the same, i.e., additional support, quicker recovery, a more enjoyable pre- and post-operative experience, and an enhanced connection. Consider the popular pairings, benefits, and the next steps you may want to take to be paired up for surgery.

## Types

Some pairings are inspired by special occasions, such as weddings. For the older bride, mother of the bride, or future mother-in-law, they may want to pursue a facelift together. This can turn back the clock 10 to 15 years, but requires at least six months advance planning to ensure complete healing. The procedure rejuvenates the lower two-thirds of the face, repositioning and tightening underlying muscle and tissues. Excess skin is removed and the incisions are closed with sutures.

For the younger bride and her bridesmaids, a light chemical peel or microdermabrasion treatment may be the right solution. These rejuvenate the skin by removing the top layer of dead skin and promoting the production of new skin cells for a brighter, smoother complexion. The two most requested minimally invasive procedures in 2013 by brides-to-be were Botox and



hyaluronic acid; both offer wrinkle-reducing benefits with no recovery time. Your facial plastic surgeon may be able to accommodate a Botox bridal party event with advanced planning.

Other pairings are inspired by the opportunity to share the journey together. Couples are choosing to have treatments as a way to bond, with procedures varying depending on age and individual needs. For those short on time or on budget, you may consider an injectable filler to increase volume or reduce wrinkles; the top three sites for fillers are the forehead, cheeks, and lips.

Women inherit body shapes and facial features from their mothers, so it's not surprising that if they're not happy with something, they both come in to change it. The process is less daunting when they do it together. The same goes for sister-sister or brother-sister combinations; they tend to come in to address similar displeasures with a familial feature, e.g., nose shape, skin conditions, chin shape, and puffy eyelids.

Since there is no longer a stigma around having cosmetic surgery, girlfriends are talking about their insecurities and deciding to take action together. Whether they start with a minimally invasive treatment or a combination of surgical procedures, the act of doing it together benefits them in several ways.

## Benefits

**Moral support.** Patients benefit from having someone by their side that understands what they are going through emotionally and physically. The idea of sharing the experience makes it less stressful before, during, and after surgery. Two sisters reported that from the consultation to the day of surgery, they talked incessantly about it—something that no one else would want to do unless they were going through it.

**Confidence boost before surgery.** Well before patients have surgery, they report a boost in self-confidence from having another person supporting their decision to have facial plastic surgery. This is validating that they are making the right choice and it makes them feel good about themselves.

**Bonding.** Shared experiences bring people closer together—and having facial plastic surgery is no exception. For couples, there is also an additional appreciation and enhanced connection because not only are they improving their appearance for themselves, but also are making the effort to remain attractive to their partner.

## moral support

**Quicker recovery.** The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery reported that recovery is quicker and with fewer complications when patients go through the surgical experience with someone. Partners that stay calm and positive for each other, while ensuring they follow all of the postoperative instructions from the facial plastic surgeon, experience smoother convalescence.

### Next steps

You and your companion have an idea of what you want to get done—together. Now what?

- Trust your face to a board certified facial plastic surgeon. Research your options and come prepared with ideas and questions, but also be open to the expert opinion of your surgeon when he or she recommends your optimal treatment plan.
- Prepare for your own consultation, not your companion's. Most surgeons will want to talk to you individually for the initial consultation to assess that you are a good candidate for the particular procedure, have realistic expectations, and are committed to the process. Be respectful of your partner if and when you have joint appointments.
- Plan how you will be supporting each other through the experience. There will be several factors that dictate what you may be able to do for each other, such as the extent of your surgeries, timing of surgery, etc. Your surgeon will assist you in formulating a detailed plan that covers everything from transportation and picking up medication to meal planning and scheduling postoperative visits. ■

## ASK THE SURGEON



*Are there certain procedures that should be avoided in the summer months?*

Sun exposure can affect facial plastic surgery results. In particular, you have to be vigilant to avoid sun exposure after facial exfoliation, resurfacing, and most laser procedures. Otherwise, sun exposure can cause discolorations or permanent scarring. Additionally, your skin needs approximately a month to completely recover and reconstruct the layer of recently exfoliated skin cells. It is best to schedule these treatments during the fall and winter. For all other procedures, your facial plastic surgeon may recommend staying out of direct sunlight during the recovery period and using sunblock with a sun protection factor of 15. ■

## HEALTH TIP



Customize the message to your teen in order to get the results you want. A University of Colorado Cancer Center study recently revealed that teens responded better to sun safety tips when the message was tailored to the consequences of appearance rather than health. Fifty students were recruited; one group watched a video on the increased skin cancer risk of ultraviolet exposure, the other video described the effects that sun exposure had on appearance such as wrinkles and premature aging. Six weeks after the viewing, the groups were compared to see which teens were exhibiting more sun safety behaviors. The study, published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, showed that the group that was shown the appearance-based video reported a dramatic increase in the use of sunscreen. Researchers concluded that if the goal is to modify teens' behavior, than the message must be presented in the right way. ■

## WHAT'S NEW?



Researchers from King's College London and the San Francisco Veteran Affairs Medical Center have developed the first lab-grown skin—the epidermis, or outermost skin layer—with a permeability barrier similar to real skin. When comparing the lab-grown epidermal equivalents to the epidermis of normal human skin, there was no significant difference in structure or functional properties. Dusko Ilic, MD, team leader at King's College London, states, “Our new method can be used to grow much greater quantities of lab-grown human epidermal equivalents, and thus could be scaled up for commercial testing of drugs and cosmetics. Human epidermal equivalents representing different types of skin could also be grown, depending on the source of the stem cells used, and could thus be tailored to study a range of skin conditions and sensitivities in different populations.” The findings were published online, April 24, 2014, in the journal, *Stem Cell Reports*. ■

## Feel better about yourself with ear surgery

The position of your ears impacts the overall harmonization and balance of your face and head. Children and adults that feel insecure or self-conscious because of their ears may benefit from ear surgery (otoplasty) in order to feel attractive and happy with their appearance.

Otoplasty is a cosmetic surgical procedure to correct large or protruding ears by reforming the cartilages that shape the ears. The ideal position is close to the head, extending from the level of the brow to the base of the nose.

The procedure can be performed at any age after the ears have reached their full size, which is typically between five to seven years of age. Most parents whose children have benefited from otoplasty would recommend the sooner your child can have the surgery, the better; since the emotional boost is significantly evident post-surgery.

Otoplasty begins with an incision just behind the ear, in the natural fold where the ear is joined to the head. The surgeon will then remove the necessary amounts of cartilage and skin required to achieve the right effect. In some cases, the surgeon will trim the cartilage, shaping it into a more desirable form and then pin the cartilage back with permanent sutures to secure the cartilage. In other instances, the surgeon will not remove any cartilage at all, using stitches to hold the cartilage permanently in place. After sculpting the cartilage to the desired shape, the surgeon will apply sutures to anchor the ear until healing occurs to hold the ear in the desired position.

A change in the shape of the ear will not affect hearing. Although the folds and convolutions of the ear do serve to concentrate and



localize sound waves, routine surgery to pin back or reshape ears will not produce a noticeable change in hearing.

Soft dressings applied to the ears will remain for a few days. Most patients experience some mild discomfort. The patient cannot put any pressure on the ear area; sleeping on one's side must be avoided for a week or two. Headbands are sometimes recommended to hold the ears in the desired position for two weeks after the surgery.

Post-surgery, patients enjoy a new ear shape and position that makes them feel confident and self-assured. Due to the naturally hidden position of the incision during otoplasty (in the crease, behind the ears), scarring is minimal and not visible. Insurance does not generally cover surgery that is purely for cosmetic reasons. Surgery to correct or improve birth defects or traumatic injuries may be reimbursable in whole or in part. Contact your facial plastic surgeon to discuss if otoplasty is right for you or your child. ■

