# FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

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## Cheers to the season: Why winter is the most popular for procedures

inter is a prevalent time of year to have cosmetic and reconstructive procedures. According to the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS), treatments and surgeries increase by approximately 25 percent from Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve. Why this season and what are people having done?

#### Winter inspirations

The holiday season typically means more family reunions, office parties, and festive get-togethers. People want to look their best for these occasions. For major surgery, plan enough time for recovery and for the full results to be apparent. If you are looking for subtle changes, treatments can be scheduled weeks or even days before an event.

This time of year, while joyful and fun, can also present additional stress. Some patients report that it is essential to schedule "me time" and pampering treatments to maintain sanity.

Facial plastic surgeons have also seen an increase in gift giving over the winter months. Whether in a dollar amount or for a specific treatment, more couples—spouses, mother/daughters, friends—enjoy sharing the experience by giving the gift of enhancement as a gift to each other. Some patients place a significant importance on the new year and find the boost in self-confidence and rejuvenated appearance as the perfect way to begin the new year.

## **Winter practicality**

The winter months offer some practical reasons for having procedures. Many find it easier to take extended time away from work over the holidays. And during recuperation, staying indoors is not such a chore when the weather isn't warm. Also, with several layers of clothing, hats, and scarves, it is easier to camouflage your recovery in cooler temperatures.

If you would prefer to not recover over the major holidays, there are also two, long holiday weekends that may be convenient, Martin Luther King Day and Presidents' Day.



#### Winter trends

Popular noninvasive treatments over the winter include neurotoxins (Botox, Xeomin, Dysport), dermal fillers, and photorejuvenation. Patients also combine these treatments with highly individualized therapies; 66 percent of AAFPRS surgeons report noninvasive treatment combinations as a top trend. While the results are immediate and there is no downtime, changes are not as comprehensive and not permanent.

Common surgeries over the winter include facelift, nose surgery, and eyelid surgery. Recovery can take one to three weeks and then an extended period before you see the final results, depending on the extent of the procedure. Follow your facial plastic surgeon's postoperative instructions for optimal healing; this may include no strenuous activity, avoiding sun exposure, and plenty of rest and relaxation.

What are you waiting for? 'Tis the season to plan for a rejuvenated you, or for the ones you love. Make a consultation appointment today to discuss your options with your facial plastic surgeon. Cheers to the season!

# Schedule your personalized holiday facelift; explore your options

s we age, the skin begins to loosen on the face and neck. The jawline softens into jowls, fat deposits emerge under the chin. and vertical folds appear at the front of the neck. Patients who want



This lift targets the middle third of the face. improving noseto-mouth lines, sagging cheeks. and nasal furrows. It is less invasive than the traditional or deep plane facelifts.

to restore and rejuvenate their visage, seek out a facelift as an ideal solution.

The procedure has evolved to provide more natural results and to meet the changing demands of the consumer. Whether you are looking for a dramatic difference or subtle updates, there are facelift options that typically differ based on the extent of tissue layers treated, the area of the face targeted, the type of incision, and the degree of invasiveness.

#### **Traditional facelift**

A full facelift, or traditional facelift, is designed to remove accumulated fat, re-support the neck muscles that have stretched, and remove excess skin in the lower two-thirds of the face. It smooths the neck area, reduces jowls, and refines the jawline. Incisions are made around and behind each ear. The skin is raised, excess fat and skin are removed, the underlying connective tissue is lifted and repositioned, and permanent or longlasting absorbable sutures are used to hold the soft tissue and overlying skin in its new location. Most patients return to work after two to three weeks; however, the full results may not be completely evident for four to six weeks. Typically, patients look 10 to 15 years younger.

#### **Deep plane facelift**

The deep plane facelift is more extensive than a full facelift. The superficial musculoaponeurotic system (SMAS), which is located underneath the skin and surrounds the facial muscles, is lifted and repositioned. Facial muscles and fat pads of the cheek and midface are elevated and then secured in a new, youthful position. While the deep plane facelift allows more facial sculpturing to correct problems in the cheek and midface region (e.g., reducing deep creases between the nose and the mouth), the procedure is more invasive and requires a longer recovery period. Incisions are made along the hairline. The results of the deep plane facelift can be remarkable, especially in the area of the cheeks, nasolabial folds, jawline, and chin.

Tiny incisions are placed within the hairline and on the inside of the mouth. During the procedure, the fat pads of the cheeks are repositioned up and over the cheekbones where they belong. This option is advantageous to the patient seeking improvement in the cheek and lower eyelid area, which the traditional facelift cannot provide.

#### Mini-facelift

A mini-facelift is less invasive than a traditional facelift. It may focus on one particular area of the face or may reduce minor sagging around the cheeks, jawline, and neck. The results are less dramatic and it may be better suited for patients with early signs of aging and mild skin laxity.

#### **Limited incision facelifts**

The S-lift, J-lift, and short scar facelift are procedures that minimize the incision length. The procedures are not as extensive as a traditional facelift and have a shorter recovery. The S-lift has an "s" shape excision near the ear. Soft tissue is fixated to the cheekbones to provide stability and fullness. The J-lift addresses the lower one-third of the face and neck by repositioning the muscles underneath the surface of the jowl. Incisions are hidden. The short scar facelift has an incision half the size of a traditional facelift incision. The lift repositions the skin and soft tissues with minimized scarring. Patients with excessive sagging skin may not be good candidates for these limited incision procedures. Note: Don't focus too much on scar length. Instead, ask your facial plastic surgeon where the incision will be placed and how it will be closed.

#### **Nonsurgical options**

Subtle changes with little to no downtime can be obtained through minimally invasive options such as a liquid facelift or stem cell facelift. A liquid facelift injects fillers into the face to fill in folds and smooth wrinkles. The stem cell facelift injects a patient's own fat cells and stem cells into the face to address loss of volume and to stimulate collagen

## **How to Prepare for Your Facelift**

Educate yourself about the procedure.
Compile questions to discuss with your facial plastic surgeon.

3. Talk to other patients that have had a similar facelift.

4. Review your surgeon's before and after photographs.

5. Check your motivation and expectations; a facelift is an opportunity to improve your appearance, not a means to perfection.

6. Design a treatment plan with your surgeon to meet your unique needs.

7. Pay attention to all preoperative instructions.

8. Follow postoperative directions explicitly for optimal results and healing.



production. Nonsurgical options have the advantage of immediate results but are only temporary.

Consider what improvements you would like to see. Are you looking for a dramatic difference? Would you prefer no downtime with subtle results? What area of your face are you looking to improve? Your facial plastic surgeon will evaluate your facial features, discuss your goals, and propose the right facelift to achieve the right results.

# ASK THE SURGEON



*Question: Can you eliminate crow's feet and laugh lines by performing facial exercises?* 

No, you cannot eliminate these wrinkles, which typically appear due to aging and the natural loss of elasticity in the skin. Performing facial exercises can strengthen muscles that support your skin and delay the progression of sagging and wrinkling, but they will not eradicate the wrinkles. Talk to your facial plastic surgeon about the specific exercises and alternatives to

consider. Injectable fillers plump up the area and can soften wrinkles around the eyes. Neurotoxins—Botox, Dysport, Xeomin—can be injected under the skin to paralyze the muscles in the face that pull the skin and cause wrinkles. Microdermabrasion uses micronized crystals to remove dead cells and smooth crow's feet lines. Your facial plastic surgeon will evaluate your wrinkles and recommend the best treatment plan.

# Health Tip



Cosmetic surgery is an investment of time, energy, and money. What can you do to protect this investment? Most patients feel especially motivated after surgery to instill and further healthy habits that support their rejuvenated, new confident self. Capitalize on this opportunity! • Eat a clean, nutrient-dense diet, i.e., minimizing processed food and ingesting a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, nuts, protein, and healthy fats.

• Drink adequate water to support the elasticity of your skin and facial

glow; drink half of your weight in ounces (not to exceed 100 ounces). Avoid excess alcohol, which can cause dehydration.

- Keep your weight within a healthy range. Excessive loss or weight gain will affect the resilience of your skin.
- Stick to a skin care routine; cleanse, exfoliate, and moisturize (with SPF 15) daily.
- Exercise to promote good circulation so cells get adequate oxygen and nutrients.

If some of these tips are difficult for you to implement or sustain, make an appointment with your facial plastic surgeon to discuss ideas and strategies personalized for you.

# WHAT'S NEW?



Although around for several years, cryotherapy (freezing treatment) is gaining new popularity as a noninvasive, skin rejuvenation option. The skin is cooled with vaporized liquid nitrogen; this stimulates blood flow, increases oxygenation of dermal cells, activates collagen production, promotes skin tightening, and restores a youthful glow. Pigmentation spots can be lightened with cryotherapy. The treatment can also shrink pores, reduce roughness, and reduce inflammation and puffiness under the eyes. Cryotherapy sessions take between 15 minutes to an hour, with no

downtime. After treatment, the area will be red and may take up to seven days to fully heal depending on the extent of your treatment.

# Addressing pigmentation concerns

Pigmentary disorders are abnormal clusters of pigmented cells. Café au lait spots, melasma, lentigines, and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation are among the most common complaints of those seeking skin care.

## Café au lait spots

Café au lait spots are tan birthmarks caused by clusters of pigmented skin cells (melanin). Moles usually appear after birth. Those that appear at birth have a higher risk of becoming skin cancer, especially if covering a large area. Moles should be checked on a regular basis. Any sudden color change, pain, or bleeding, should warrant an immediate check with your doctor.

Surgical removal of a lesion is the preferred treatment in cases where the mole has a high risk of becoming malignant (cancerous). Laser surgery, surgical scraping, and cryotherapy (freezing) are not permanent solutions. The lesion will reappear eventually. Medical treatment is not necessary if the birthmark degenerates over time.

## Lentigines

Lentigines, also known as age spots or liver spots, are harmless, oversized freckles. They tend to appear due to photodamage caused by ultraviolet radiation from the sun. The melanocytes (pigment-producing cells) release too much pigment in response to the harmful effects of sun exposure. If bothersome, patients may ask their facial plastic surgeon for camouflage techniques; otherwise, topical creams, peels, and lasers may be used.

## **Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation**

Post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation can occur when there is traumapimple, burn, laser resurfacing, etc.—to the skin that causes inflammation and increased blood flow to the area. The increased blood flow stimulates the melanocytes to secrete more melanin, which causes the area to darken. Without treatment, it can take years to fade.



## Melasma

Hormones, genetics, medications, and environmental factors can cause melasma, or darker patches of skin. Melasma is often seen on the cheeks, forehead, and above the lips. The condition is most common in women after pregnancy or those taking oral contraceptives. The melanocytes are hypersensitive to ultraviolet light and overproduce melanin in the affected areas. The condition usually fades after giving birth or discontinuing oral contraceptives. If the pigmentation does not lighten or if the trigger is not hormone or medicine related, topical creams, chemical peels, or laser treatments can be used to improve the skin color and tone.

Be proactive with proper skin care: clean, exfoliate, moisturize, and protect with sun screen. Most pigment blemishes can be camouflaged with make-up or treated via topical creams, steroids, antibiotics, chemical peels, laser treatment, or surgical removal. Your facial plastic surgeon will tailor the treatment based on your skin tone, severity, and extent of the pigmentation problem. Make your appointment today to discuss your aesthetic and medical concerns and the best mode of concealment or treatment.