

EXPERT ADVICE FROM A FACIAL PLASTIC SURGEON

The aesthetic industry has expanded very rapidly, leading to exaggerated marketing, confusion, poor results, and fears of looking “fake” among patients who want to enhance or rejuvenate their appearance. However, it is possible to get high-quality and natural results by avoiding the gimmicks, learning about the procedures, and carefully choosing the proper providers. This monthly series focuses on providing helpful information about the various aspects and procedures of facial aesthetics.

3 MAIN AREAS OF FACIAL AGING

WHAT HAPPENS AND WHAT CAN BE DONE — PART 2

SKIN CHANGES

- Skin is the most challenging to treat as it typically requires various modalities, multiple treatments, prevention, and maintenance. Most focus on stimulating the skin to heal itself.
- There are too many treatments to list. You should choose based what aspect is being treated, amount of expected improvement, # of sessions / commitment, downtime, and risk.
- Ablative Lasers: (ie CO2, Erbium) Remove the top layer of skin, results after 1 session, but more downtime.
- Non-Ablative Lasers (ie Fraxel, Moxi, IPL, BBL) Stimulate deeper skin layers, usually minimal to no downtime but require multiple sessions. Target various aspects depending on the laser.
- Microneedling: Create tiny holes to stimulate rejuvenation. Allow topical application of rejuvenating medications and growth factors. Results and downtime depend on the device, how it's used, and what is applied topically.
- Biostimulators: (ie hyperdilute Radiesse) Injected under the skin to add thickness and stimulate collagen. Minimal to no downtime.

VOLUME LOSS

- Fat Grafting: Your own fat cells provide a great option for volume replacement. Those that survive the initial transfer will survive for many years (but are also subject to the aging process). They provide a secondary stem cell effect. Unless someone is very skinny, they are plentiful in supply. The down-side is they require a small procedure, which involves harvesting from another area and more swelling / downtime. They are not simply dissolvable in case of unwanted results. We also cannot be sure how many will survive.
- Filler: These have gained a poor reputation due to improper use and abuse, but can be great when used properly. Two main advantages are variability and convenience. With so many different fillers, we can choose the ones with properties that favor a particular area or purpose. No harvesting required, can be done quickly in the office, simply open a package and inject. Downside is they are not permanent, but some can spread and expand. They must be used wisely.
- Biostimulators: Sculptra and Radiesse are fillers that the body replaces with collagen. Thus they stimulate the body to fill the area with collagen. They provide more volume than fillers and can last longer, but are not dissolvable and can interfere with future surgeries.

LAXITY

- Facelift: This King of laxity procedures focuses on lifting the cheeks, jowls, jawline, and neck. The deep layers of the face are suspended back to their more youthful positions. Careful modern day techniques, especially with deep plane facelifts, allow us to give naturally rejuvenated results without the classic “facelift-look”.
- Browlift: Often added on to facelifts in order to restore the natural position of the eyebrows. Can be done to address the lateral (outer part) only, or the entire brow. Also a feared procedure for the “surprised-look”, but can do wonders when executed properly.
- Lift Lift: The top lip is the main point of aging in the central face, but often overlooked. A lip lift restores the lip length, shape, fullness, and tooth show.
- Upper Eyelid Surgery: The upper lids are usually subject to excess skin, which can be removed. It's important to preserve the middle fat and suspend the brow fat pad.
- Lower Eyelid Surgery: This one is highly variable depending on the patient.
- Necklift: Usually incorporated with a facelift, but can be a standalone procedure. The platysma muscle is tightened and extra skin is removed.

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