

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

TODAY

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Get educated on your options with *The Face Book*

Studies have shown that an educated patient is a more satisfied patient. Take the time to get information from authorized sources. As you gather the information, write down any questions you have and then make a consultation appointment to discuss your options.

Collect information

There are a number of ways to assemble information about a particular procedure or treatment. You should start by calling your physician's office and asking if they can provide resources. Check your facial plastic surgeon's Web site for specific information on what procedures and treatments are available and how he or she approaches enhancements or reconstructions. Your facial plastic surgeon will have brochures, journals, and books, such as *The Face Book*—a comprehensive guidebook on cosmetic and reconstructive treatments and procedures—available in his or her office for you to peruse.

Of special interest to patients, *The Face Book* is published by the American Academy of Facial Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS). First printed in 1988, hundreds of readers—patients and surgeons alike—have contacted the AAFPRS commenting on how helpful the information is, along with requests for more updated material. In 1998, a second edition was published and over 30,000 copies were sold. The positive feedback and suggestions for additional content on the innovative techniques and new technology has led to a third edition of the book, published in the fall of 2009.

This publication includes three new chapters on the latest office-based procedures: neurotoxins, injectable fillers, and non-ablative laser and light therapies. There are many before and after photographs, detailed illustrations, and patient testimonials. You will find this resource in-depth, yet easy to understand and very helpful. To order your copy, ask your physician or visit: www.aafprfacebook.org.



Consult your physician

Once you have researched the procedure or treatment and composed some questions about it, you are ready to meet with your facial plastic surgeon. Be prepared to talk about how you feel regarding your facial features, the procedures or treatments you are interested in, and your motivations for seeking your physician's services. As you go through your questions, make sure you understand your doctor's responses. Keep asking questions until you do understand and take notes. This will be

very helpful when you arrive home and start processing all of the information you discussed. Some patients feel more comfortable bringing a friend or family member with them.

Decide next steps

Whether you formulate a treatment plan at the consultation appointment or at a later time, you can expect that your physician will provide you with detailed instructions and resources. Taking the time to get educated, formulate questions, and speak with your physician will ensure that you are making the right decision for you. ■

Compile questions

As you gather and review the information, make a list of questions. The following should get you started:

- What are my options?
- What are the benefits of each treatment?
- How many times has your physician performed this treatment or surgery?
- What are the risks and side effects associated with this procedure?
- How long is the recovery?
- Are there any foods, drugs, or activities that should be avoided?
- Will this treatment require any lifestyle changes?

Revamping the windows to your soul, cosmetically

The area around your eyes is prone to showing signs of aging long before the rest of your facial features. If you look in the mirror and see a tired, aged, and worn reflection, you may be interested to know that there are ways to improve and rejuvenate! From simple remedies and creams to injections and blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery), you can achieve a more youthful, bright appearance.

As the skin starts to thin around our eyes, the blood vessels become more apparent, i.e., dark circles. Avoid applying eyeliner or mascara to the lower lashes so that you do not draw attention to the under eye area. Apply a concealer that is yellow or green-based to counteract the blueness. The product should be hypoallergenic, fragrance free, opaque, and waterproof. Dark circles can also be genetic, due to excess pigment in the skin. Creams with hydroquinone and retinoids (vitamin A derivatives) will lighten dark areas.

Crows feet are tiny wrinkles that radiate from the corner of your eyes. They can be treated through various methods. An injectable filler will plump up the area and soften the wrinkles. Fillers are temporary and will require repeated treatments. Botulinum toxin, BOTOX®, can be injected under the skin to paralyze the muscles in the face that pull the skin and cause wrinkles. The resulting smooth skin lasts from three to six months. Microdermabrasion uses micronized crystals to remove dead cells and smooth crow's feet and forehead lines. Chemical peels can be used to remove the superficial layer of skin, boost collagen production, and soften wrinkles. Laser



resurfacing may also be used to treat crow's feet. It works by penetrating the outermost layer of skin and is absorbed by deeper layers where it stimulates collagen production.

While minimally invasive techniques are quick and convenient, the results do not last as long. The alternative is eyelid surgery, which is used to reshape and adjust the lids for both cosmetic and functional purposes. Cosmetically, you may want to reduce the excess skin in your upper eyelids to create a younger, more wide-eyed appearance. In upper eyelid surgery, your physician will follow the natural lines and creases of the eyelid in order to keep the scars as invisible as possible. The incision is made and excess fat, muscle, and loose skin are removed. Fine sutures are used to close the incision and minimize the visibility of any scar. For patients that seek to add a crease to their upper eyelid, a variation of this surgery is used. Patients whose field of vision is limited due to ptosis-drooping upper eyelid that is congenital or develops with age—may be able to receive reimbursement since the procedure is medically necessary.

Most people seek lower blepharoplasty to eliminate the bags under their eyes. The surgeon can make an incision under the lower lashes or from inside of the lower eyelid to remove the skin and fatty tissues. The scar is hidden and self-dissolving sutures may or may not be used. Blepharoplasty provides dramatic results, leaving the skin around your eyes smoother and younger looking.

Your facial plastic surgeon may discuss the option of a browlift. The aging process can cause your forehead skin to sag and your eyebrows to lower over your eyelids. This creates a scowl or angry overall appearance. You may be a good candidate for a browlift. Small incisions are placed just above the brow or in a wrinkle crease. Excess skin is excised, the underlying tissues are tightened, and the incisions are closed. An endoscopic browlift uses an endoscope to perform the surgery, and thus the incisions are much smaller. The result of a browlift is raised brows and smoother skin.

Unlike the low-tech, quick treatments, you should also consider that surgery will require recuperation time usually lasting one to two weeks. After eyelid surgery or a browlift, the eye area may feel tight. Your facial plastic surgeon will give you specific postoperative instructions to ensure a quick and easy recovery. Make sure you keep your head elevated, use cold compresses to reduce swelling, and apply prescribed eye drops to ease dryness or itching. If you have stitches, they will be removed two to seven days after the surgery.

Low-tech, quick treatments

If you are lacking sleep and retaining water around the eyes—besides the obvious remedy of getting more rest—lay down with a moist, cold washcloth over your eyes for 15 minutes to reduce the swelling. Another option is to moisten two tea bags with cold water and place them on your eyes. The tannin in the tea may help tighten the skin and reduce puffiness. There are also topical creams you can try; products that contain antioxidants will tighten and brighten stressed-out skin. Moisturizers with anti-aging ingredients like vitamins C or B5 can improve the eye area slightly with continued use over time.



If you want to revamp the windows of your soul, make an appointment with your facial plastic surgeon to discuss your options. There are a variety of treatments to improve puffiness, sagging, fine lines, and droopiness. Take action so that you will look as young as you feel! ■

ASK THE SURGEON



I am 38 years old and still suffer from acne breakouts. What is going on? I wash my face regularly. Why am I still getting breakouts?

Excessive oil, dead skin, and bacteria that accumulate and clog the pores cause acne. There are many reasons why adult acne may be appearing including stress, medication side effect, medical condition, menstrual hormone fluctuations, harsh skin care products, and even genetics. Reduce your chance of developing adult acne and help treat breakouts by first seeing your physician. Let your facial plastic surgeon evaluate your skin and offer treatment options that meet your unique needs. This is a good opportunity to review any medications you are taking and how they may be affecting your skin. Make sure you choose your skin care products carefully with no perfumes or unnecessary additives. Try to control your stress level and continue to practice proper skin care by washing your face twice a day with a mild cleanser. ■

HEALTH TIP



Illnesses spread from person to person via respiratory droplets. Typically, an infected person coughs or sneezes and these droplets move through the air and land on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Germs can also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth, or nose. Some viruses and bacteria can live from 20 minutes up to two hours or more on surfaces like tables, doorknobs, and desks.

What can you do to stop the spread of germs? Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and then throw it away. If you do not have a tissue, use your elbow or hands—but then immediately wash your hands. When you wash your hands, use soap and warm water and rub your hands vigorously together for 15 to 20 seconds. You can also use an alcohol-based hand wipe or gel sanitizer if you do not have soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. If you do get sick, stay home, get plenty of rest, and check with your physician as needed. ■

WHAT'S NEW?



In July 2009, the Food and Drug Administration approved Sculptra Aesthetic—a long-lasting injectable filler—to correct shallow to deep smile lines, contour deficiencies, and other facial wrinkles. The filler is made of poly-L-lactic acid microparticles. As these microparticles break down, the body produces collagen. It may require more than one treatment. In a clinical study, patients were injected in a single regimen of up to four sessions (at three-week intervals) over a nine-week period. The smoothing effect lasted for up to 25 months in some patients, depending upon the initial severity of the facial wrinkle and fold contour deficiency. ■

Facial plastic surgeons heed the call, *Faces of Honor*

The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) launched the Faces of Honor program to connect military service members and veterans with facial plastic surgeons. The purpose is to provide pro bono medical and surgical expertise to those who were deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan and received face or neck injuries. It is a way to say thank you to the brave men and women who have served our country so well by offering them the skills and surgical adroitness of caring physicians.



There are three eligibility considerations. The military service member or veteran (1) must have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), including the middle east with honorable discharge; (2) must have sustained a war related face, head or neck injury, either in combat or through combat related support activity; and (3) must be a member of the United States Armed Forces (or Department of Defense eligible NATO/coalition forces) either active duty, or active reserve (activated and deployed in support of OIF or OEF).

Surgeries that veterans might receive include repairing breathing-related issues from nasal injuries, scar revision, skin grafting, lip reconstruction, hair restoration related to scalp burns, and reconstructive cheekbone or jawbone surgery. Some veterans may have already received treatment in a military hospital while on active duty and may have been discharged. Others may have relocated to their home base and remain on active duty,

being cared for by a Department of Defense or Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facility. Several veterans may be from the National Guard or reserve, geographically separated from a VA facility, or just looking for an additional caregiver consultation. The volunteer surgeons are offering to help complement the care that these facilities and medical staff provide, not trying to

compete with it. The AAFPRS seeks to help eligible veterans find a qualified surgeon with the best matched skills and hopefully in a fairly convenient location.

The AAFPRS was founded in 1974 and represents over 2,700 facial plastic and reconstructive surgeons throughout the world. In 1990, the humanitarian program, FACE TO FACE, was created. Internationally, FACE TO FACE provides humanitarian assistance primarily to children suffering from facial deformities caused by birth or by trauma. Here at home, FACE TO FACE: The National Domestic Violence Project assists survivors of domestic violence through pro bono surgery, enhancing their self-esteem and aiding them in rebuilding their lives. In 2009, Faces of Honor, will be another way facial plastic surgeons can give back to their community, and in particular, reiterate their sincere gratitude to the service men and women and their families for their sacrifices.

If you know of a service member or veteran that may be interested or eligible, let them know about the program or have them visit www.facesofhonor.org. ■