

Health Trends

The Changing Face Of Plastic Surgery

(NAPSA)—In our aesthetically obsessed society, plastic surgery has recently gained tremendous popularity and visibility due to the radical transformations depicted on shows such as “The Swan” and “Extreme Makeover.” Few Americans, however, are aware of plastic surgery’s less glamorous, more practical origins. The “Edwin Smith Papyrus,” the origins of which are dated at approximately 3000 B.C., contains the first description of the surgical management of facial trauma.

Today, men and women alike are turning to plastic surgery to help them achieve a desired image, increase self-confidence or correct physical problems. Statistics from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) indicate that cosmetic procedures increased 33 percent in 2003 to 8.7 million, with 45 percent representing return patients. Top procedures included nose reshaping, liposuction, breast augmentation, eyelid surgery and face-lift.

Moreover, with 66 percent of Americans above the age of 20 considered overweight or obese and six percent morbidly obese, many patients are increasingly turning to bariatric procedures such as gastric bypass or lap-band surgery. Therefore, procedures designed to remove the pounds of excess skin that usually accompany extreme weight loss have experienced dramatic growth. In fact, during the last three years, the number of upper arm lift and lower body lift procedures increased by a staggering 1,332 percent and 1,398 percent, respectively.

Safer, More Precise

Recent advances have made plastic surgery safer and more precise—increasing its appeal to patients who may have previously considered but held off on often life-changing procedures. As one example, wound closure has come



LOOKING GOOD—As baby boomers age, the upsurge in cosmetic procedures will continue.

a long way since the time when sutures were made from flax, hemp and hair. Now, both surgeons and patients can benefit from such cutting-edge innovations as **DERMABOND® Topical Skin Adhesive**, a glue-like alternative to sutures that provides the strength of healed tissue after seven days in just three minutes. The adhesive also acts as a protective dressing, enabling the patient to shower immediately after application and providing a microbial barrier that blocks germs that can lead to infection.

Patient Checklist

For anyone contemplating a cosmetic or any other surgical procedure, the following is a checklist of important considerations:

- Choose a doctor who is a nationally recognized surgeon.
- Talk to your doctor regarding potential risks involved in any surgical procedure.
- Consider getting preoperative counseling to discuss expectations of the surgery.
- Learn what type of anesthesia is used and its possible effects.
- Discuss wound closure and expected recovery time with your doctor.