Cosmetic Surgery – A Rising Trend

We have seen, over the past 40 years, a continued rise in the number of patients seeking surgery to improve their physical appearance.

A teenager may seek surgery to improve upon an undesirable feature in hope of enhancing their social life.

A middle-aged individual may desire to maintain or improve their economic status in a corporate structure.

An elderly individual may seek a more useful appearance in the hope of providing an emotional uplift.

In a stable individual, with realistic expectations, there is uniformly a rise in self-esteem and quality of life.

These are just a few examples of personality types who seek plastic surgery. I would place them in the following categories:

Generation Z

Born after 1995 – their day would not be normal without a cell phone in hand. These young men and women are very much into their looks. They may seek a "tweeking" of the nose or breast enlargement as their high school graduation present or a last birthday or Christmas gift before prom their senior year.

Generation Y

Born between 1980 and 1995 (the "Millenium" or "Next" Generation) This group is very "techy," with strong morals and civic duty. They may be on a treadmill for an hour and want a tummy tuck/liposuction or breast lift or augmentation.

Generation X

Born between 1965 and 1979. Often had both parents working while being exposed to daycare and divorce. Interested in Botox and other "fillers." They seek a lift, tightening, and firming wherever needed. It can be common for a couple to come in together for a procedure.

Baby Boomer Generation

Baby Boomers I were born between 1946 and 1954 and Baby Boomers II (or Generation Jones) were born between 1955 and 1964. They enjoy their freedom, traveling, and wanting to look younger and better amongst their friends and colleagues. They will sometimes come in for same-day procedures and spend one night at a nearby hotel to be pampered. Why not? You have but one life to live!

Veterans

This group may be interested in a secondary facelift or upper lid bleph. They include the ***Depression Era*** *(born between 1912 and 1921), the* ***World War II*** *generation (born between 1922 to 1927),* ***Post-war cohort*** *(born between 1928 and 1945).*

There have been numerous modifications in techniques in recent years, with but few radical changes in the basic surgery to improve the shape of the nose, a facelift, eyelid surgery, the breasts, or the abdomen. There have, however, been significant changes in such areas as newer and safer anesthesia procedures and improved drugs to ward off complications.

Surgery locales have also changed, with most procedures performed in an outpatient setting, often in an office-based surgical facility.

Newer synthetic materials continue to be developed to improve contour deformities of the face and elsewhere in the body. Multiple newer methods are being developed to improve the appearance of the skin. Lasers are being used more commonly. Liposuction is being more frequently requested. The endoscopic approach is used more often to minimize the size of surgical incisions and to expedite healing. Preserved human tissue, a sailor skin graft, which can be transplanted without fear of rejection, is being more commonly used.

The attitude of the general public towards cosmetic surgery has changed dramatically. In past years a patient undergoing a rhinoplasty or a facelift would often go into hiding at home, or check into a hotel, until the bandages were removed and most of the swelling had disappeared.

In today's world it is not unusual to have patients freely discussing their cosmetic surgery over lunch. Formerly, cosmetic procedures were performed primarily on women, however, in today's world, we have a rising number of men undergoing cosmetic surgery.

Newer tools have been developed for cosmetic surgery. The laser allows for an effective method of skin resurfacing and for improvement of fine wrinkles, especially around the mouth. The laser is also being used for tattoo removal, treatment of cellulite, improvement of acne-scarred skin, certain birthmarks, and treatment of striae-stretch marks, commonly seen on the abdomen following a pregnancy.

Liposuction, as a selective removal of fat to improve body contour, has gained tremendous popularity. There have been continuous changes in the equipment and techniques used. In recent years, fat removal has been assisted by the use ultrasound and laser.

Newer methods are being used to enhance healing. Hyperbaric oxygen is being employed. Topical applications of various gels and other modalities are being frequently used.

The impact of smoking on delayed healing is a significant factor, especially after a facelift.

Today, many well-trained cosmetic surgeons are available in every major city. There are, however, physicians in many specialties performing cosmetic surgery who have had minimal training. When contemplating cosmetic surgery, a person should seek competent advice regarding the training, skill, and experience of the surgeon. The surgeon should be well-based in general surgical principles and have specialized plastic surgery training. The American Board of Plastic Surgery assures you that the physician has fulfilled basic training requirements and has passed a rigorous examination prior to being certified.

To undergo cosmetic plastic surgery can be one of the most important decisions you make. Your life may take on a new dimension when a self-observed facial or body deformity is corrected.

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