



THE LATEST TRENDS IN PLASTIC SURGERY

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The public's interest in cosmetic surgery and non-surgical procedures is at an all-time high.

IN 2004, FOR EXAMPLE, nearly 12 million cosmetic procedures were performed, up over 40 percent in one year! This dramatic increase is a result of a number of trends, including aging baby boomers and popular "makeover" television shows. More than ever, people realize the powerful benefits of looking younger. In addition to greater self-esteem and confidence,

patients see improved social relations and advancement in the workplace.

The plastic surgeon is uniquely positioned to assist individuals in their goal to look better and feel younger. No other medical specialty can offer expertise in such a wide range of treatments, from simple creams to complex surgeries (and everything in between).

Several important trends allow patients to achieve even better results nowadays with less side effects or down time:

- 1) Minimal incision surgery offers excellent results with very little visible scarring and can be used for the face, breasts, tummy and other areas. Fewer scars can also result in fewer complications and a faster period of healing. Specific examples include breast implants with no breast scars, brow lifting with incisions of less than one inch, facelifts with no scars behind the ears, or tummy tucks without the long scars.
- 2) Non-surgical therapies offer rejuvenation without any scars and with minimal down time. They also are generally less costly than formal surgery. These treatments overall are up by more than 750% over the last 8 years, with Botox® injections up by over 4000%! Botox® remains a mainstay of wrinkle reduction when it is necessary to reduce the muscle action that creates skin folding, while fillers such as Restylane® have been dramatically successful at filling existing wrinkles or enhancing the lips. The range of therapies that use intense light or lasers have also greatly expanded, particularly the ones that have no down time (such as FotoFacial RF®).
- 3) Many patients experience less pain with surgeries than years ago. There are better and safer medications available for both the anesthesia and discomfort at home, and the ability to offer many surgeries without a general anesthesia is possible. Moreover, new devices are in use that allows pain-reducing medication to be pumped automatically to the surgery site for added comfort.
- 4) Demographically, patients seeking plastic surgery are starting younger today than in the past. This often means smaller procedures or surgeries are often sufficient, results can appear more "natural," certain aging changes can actually be prevented, and recovery may be faster.

Plastic surgery has never been better able to help you put your best face forward! If you have been considering any procedure, be sure that a physician's

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credentials are exemplary. One very efficient way of screening for doctors to meet in consultation is through the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery at www.surgery.org. There are fewer than 3,000 such members in the entire country, and all have been board certified by a legitimate board and demonstrated special focus in aesthetic plastic surgery.

Saul R. Berger, MD is a board-certified plastic surgeon who has practiced for over 15 years in the Los Angeles area. He is a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery and the clinical faculty of USC. Dr. Berger specializes in all of the procedures described above as well as the full range of plastic and cosmetic surgery. He is the director of Skin Deep Laser Medspa in Pasadena, and can be reached there at 626-449-8873.

