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Facial Rejuvenation & Skin Care: Not Just for Women

By David J. Levens, MD, PA, FACS

For generations, men tended to dismiss skin care as somehow “unmanly”. Concern for proper skin care was not something typically passed from father to son. But a rapid acceleration in the rates of skin cancer, coupled with dramatic changes in men’s fashion, have changed all that.

Today, men have a much greater understanding of the role proper skin care can play in terms of both health and appearance. Men are spending more on cosmetic procedures, treatments and products than ever before. Even the economic downturn hasn’t undermined this trend because downsizing is making men as well as women more conscious that a healthy, more youthful look can help them better compete for available jobs.

Manufacturers of skin care products for men are recognizing that even motivated men are more likely to choose products that get the job done as efficiently as possible. The new PCA® MEN line is one of several that have simplified the process to three quick steps. When it comes to facial rejuvenation treatments, men are also choosing options that achieve results quickly with little downtime.

These include: Botox® to diminish frown lines, forehead lines and crow’s feet; facial fillers like Radiesse® or Restylane® to fill in laugh lines, plump up unattractive hollows and reduce the appearance of under-eye bagginess; lasers, peels and dermabrasion to smooth fine wrinkles.

In many cases, facial sculpting using such treatments can significantly delay the need for surgical procedures.

When more invasive measures are needed, a facelift isn’t the only option. Depending on the patient’s skin quality and facial structure, there are a range of facial sculpting procedures which can dramatically enhance the appearance. These include reshaping of the nose and ears (the two facial features that don’t stop growing as we age), reshaping of the chin to make it more or less prominent as necessary, upper and lower eyelid surgery, brow lifts and liposuction to remove fatty deposits under chin.

However, when the skin becomes quite loose, creating jowls at the jaw line that are very aging, a facelift and/or neck lift is the only way to reclaim a more youthful look. That’s

because while other approaches can help camouflage sagging skin for a time, eventually the excess skin must be removed.

A facelift begins with the surgeon making small incisions within the hair at the temples, in the skin creases in front of and behind the ears, and within the hair behind the ears. (Location of incisions can vary and care must be taken to ensure proper beard lines for men). Then, the surgeon gently elevates the skin and deeper facial tissue. Next, the skin and deeper tissue are lifted very carefully in a generally backward and upward direction to reposition and retighten them in a more satisfactory location.

If necessary, loose neck muscles are tightened and repositioned to provide better support and ideal contour. In both face and neck areas, excess or malpositioned fatty tissue is either repositioned or sculpted through liposuction or direct removal. After re-draping the skin and soft tissues, excess tissue is removed and the incisions are closed with very tiny stitches to help minimize the appearance of scars.

Patients must stop smoking at least 3 weeks before and after surgery because nicotine delays healing. For some patients, this is the “final straw” that helps them break the nicotine habit. Recovery and downtime varies somewhat but here’s the typical schedule: Bruising and swelling, 5-10 days; return to work and social activity, 10-21 days; no aerobic or strenuous activity, 14-21 days.

Whether or not any type of cosmetic treatment or procedure is right for you, my Father’s Day wish for all male readers is that the year ahead include a healthy skin care regimen that includes sunscreen, proper hydration and avoidance of irritants such as nicotine.

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