beauty for life

A guide to looking great at every age.
Cosmetic medical care today spans many treatments and procedures. From nonsurgical beauty treatments to more intensive surgical procedures, a variety of options can meet and maintain your beauty and appearance ideals throughout a lifetime.

This guide will help you learn about the full array of cosmetic medical care procedures so you can choose what’s right for you at any age. Because it’s not about beauty for a day, for a week, for a month—it’s about beauty for life.
Plastic surgeons convey information that empowers patients to make the right choices over the years for results that patients tell us improve their self-image and self-esteem.
We all know that as we age, our bodies will change. But the process doesn’t occur at the same rate over the decades. In fact, the older we become, the faster we age.

The passage of time and the pull of gravity cause us to lose the natural collagen and fat in and under our skin, thinning the outer tissues and leading to wrinkles. Below the skin, fat cells diminish and collect in less desirable places—such as under our eyes and jawline.

We gain weight more easily, stress enhances the lines in our brows and around our mouths, and for some individuals, the skin around our stomachs, hips, legs, and breasts stretches and sags.

There are many nonsurgical and surgical ways to improve our appearance and diminish the effects of the aging process. Exercising, healthy eating, avoiding tobacco, and reducing ultraviolet light exposure are simple ways to maintain our health and bodies throughout life. Certain noninvasive and minimally invasive cosmetic procedures enhance the way we look and lessen the impacts of age and sun exposure. Surgical procedures offer more lasting solutions to reduce the evidence of aging on our skin and bodies.

Plastic surgeons rely on their in-depth medical knowledge of the entire human body—its changes over time and its response to external factors—to accurately map our health and beauty goals at the appropriate life stages. They help us understand our options and manage our expectations.
The best way to view Beauty for Life™ is as a group of procedures in four levels:

- **noninvasive**
- **minimally invasive**
- **moderately invasive**
- **surgical**

Plastic surgeons are uniquely qualified to provide you with a continuum of care, helping to evaluate your cosmetic medicine and surgical needs across all four levels of cosmetic procedures—from the least invasive to the most comprehensive.
While these general levels are based on the outcomes and relative risks of certain treatments, there are important relationships among the levels, which explain why we should consider them as a continuum.

Here is some general information to consider about each level, including what the procedures can and cannot do, who’s best able to provide each type of treatment, the realistic outcomes of the most common treatments and procedures, and their similarities and differences.

Plastic surgeons work with patients at all stages of life, evaluating health, medical, psychological history, and body type to provide comprehensive advice according to their personal cosmetic medicine goals. They help explain the specific results a procedure can and cannot deliver and its associated risks; how to choose the right course of action depending on our age, needs, and wishes; and what we can expect to look like after the procedure.
Noninvasive cosmetic procedures—or spa treatments—are therapeutic and relaxing, designed primarily to reduce blemishes and revitalize and protect the skin. The results are temporary.

These techniques and treatments—such as cellulite wraps, facials, and deep tissue massages—are used by people of all ages, from younger people who want to improve skin tone to older adults looking to relieve muscle tension or back pain.
Minimally invasive treatments even out our skin tone, increase cell turnover, promote cell growth, remove unsightly veins or abnormal hair growth, and stimulate collagen production to help the skin retain its softness and reduce the appearance of lines and wrinkles.

Common procedures include light-based treatments to remove sunspots (e.g., Intense Pulsed Light, or IPL®), microdermabrasion, light skin peels, spider vein treatment, hair removal, and treatment of leg veins. These treatments—usually undertaken in a series—are not without risk and should be performed by a trained provider overseen by a plastic surgeon.

Medical skin care can produce pleasing outcomes for patients by reducing the effects of sun damage and discolorations and improving skin texture.

Unlike others who may be trained in only a few cosmetic procedures, plastic surgeons are educated in the full spectrum of cosmetic surgical and nonsurgical care. They hone their skills and techniques through one of the lengthiest and most comprehensive training programs in all of medicine.
Moderately invasive procedures, while nonsurgical, are neither risk-free nor a substitute for plastic surgery. This level includes injection therapy with Botox®, soft tissue fillers, laser skin resurfacing, deep chemical peels, nonsurgical skin tightening, and cellulite treatments.

The longevity of these treatments varies—from a few months to a few years. For a time, they reduce the appearance of lines and creases, plump thin lips, enhance shallow contours, and soften wrinkles. But we don’t achieve the same results as we would with surgery or surgery combined with moderately invasive procedures, which produce more noticeable and longer lasting results.

Besides delivering great results for patients through comprehensive cosmetic procedures, our focus as plastic surgeons is on patient safety. We believe that patients deserve the highest quality of care and safety, which is delivered in our accredited facilities.
Surgical or invasive procedures reposition our tissue and restore lost volume to rejuvenate our faces. Body contouring can reduce fat deposits, lift sagging skin, and shape our arms, hips, and thighs. The most common surgical procedures can be grouped in three categories:

- **Face** – surgical repositioning and volume restoration
  - Facial rejuvenation—eyelid surgery, forehead lift, facelift, and neck lift
  - Facial implants
  - Ear surgery and nose reshaping
- **Breast** – breast lifts, augmentations, and reductions
- **Body Contouring** – liposuction, tummy tucks, and arm, thigh, and body lifts

Plastic surgeons are actively involved in research to develop new techniques and improve existing procedures that will deliver scientifically proven outcomes for patients undergoing cosmetic or reconstructive procedures. Plastic surgeons are directing cutting-edge advances in the field, based on research using stem cells, biomaterials, and biomechanical engineering.
step by step

beauty for life
Cosmetic medicine and surgery should be evaluated in terms of your lifetime goals for beauty. We all have personal, social, lifestyle, and physical considerations at each stage of life. You must carefully weigh the many options available so that your unique needs and expectations are fulfilled to the greatest possible extent by a qualified plastic surgeon.

There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to optimal beauty; it’s up to you and your plastic surgeon to choose the ideal path to achieve all your goals. As you take those steps, your plastic surgeon will be there for you to offer advice and guidance along the way.

We all go through similar stages of development and face common issues in our growth and aging process. Here’s an overall guide to Beauty for Life, step by step.

Plastic surgeons have comprehensive knowledge of the aging process: the ways our skin and bodies change over time, the impact of the environment and our lifestyle, and the best methods to enhance and preserve appearance at any age.
Peer acceptance is a basic desire of all teens, but young people with physical differences such as large noses, protruding ears, and skin disorders may feel especially self-conscious.

Plastic surgery can shape the nose or reset the ears so that teens can focus on school, sports, socializing, and fun. And certain minimally invasive treatments, such as laser hair removal and medical skin care, can improve the appearance and health of skin. These procedures help boost confidence during these critical years of development.

**Most popular procedures:**

- Microdermabrasion
- Male breast reduction
- Laser hair removal
- Ear surgery
- Female breast reduction
- Nose reshaping
We’re focused on looking our best during our first forays into the working world as young adults.

To sharpen our appearance, we may initiate a regime to brighten and protect the skin with sunscreen, microdermabrasion, and light-based treatments; correct breast size and nose imperfections through cosmetic surgery; and remove unsightly hairs and spider veins with laser procedures.

**twenties**

*Most popular procedures:*

- Medical skin care
- Botox
- Laser skin resurfacing
- Breast reduction
- Liposuction
- Microdermabrasion
- Injectable fillers
- Skin tightening
- Nose reshaping
- Laser hair removal
- Laser treatment of leg veins
- Breast augmentation/lift
- Tummy tuck
At this point our confidence and assertiveness are on full display; we’re hitting our stride for work and for family—for life.

We’re also beginning to notice lines and creases at our brow and around our mouths, sun damage, additional weight gain, and—especially for mothers—some stretching and drooping of our skin and breasts. Personal fitness and avoiding excess weight become especially important.

This is the time to explore injection therapies to treat forehead frown lines and laugh lines and consider post-pregnancy surgical procedures to lift or enhance the breasts, tighten the tummy, and contour the hips, and thighs.

Most popular procedures:

- Medical skin care
- Light-based treatments
- Injectable fillers
- Laser skin resurfacing
- Breast reduction
- Liposuction
- Microdermabrasion
- Chemical peel
- Laser treatment of leg veins
- Breast augmentation/lift
- Nose reshaping
- Laser hair removal
- Botox
- Sclerotherapy
- Skin tightening
- Tummy tuck
As we approach mid-life, we’re focusing on maintaining our health and appearance through exercise and lifestyle adjustments to enhance our energy and rejuvenate our best features.

To reduce the signs of aging around our eyes and along the neckline, we’re combining injection therapy at our forehead with an eyelid surgery or brow lift to brighten facial expression and diminish baggy eyes and crow’s feet. Skin fillers improve the contour of the lips and fill in the facial areas where we are starting to lose volume.

It’s a time when we decide to undertake liposuction or a tummy tuck to complement our rigorous and regular physical activity regime.

Most popular procedures:

- Medical skin care
- Light-based treatments
- Injectable fillers
- Breast augmentation/lift
- Facelift
- Skin tightening
- Liposuction
- Microdermabrasion
- Chemical peel
- Laser skin resurfacing
- Breast reduction
- Brow lift
- Nose reshaping
- Laser hair removal
- Botox
- Sclerotherapy
- Facial rejuvenation
- Eyelid surgery
- Tummy tuck
Still at work and putting kids through college, we aren’t slowing down, so we’re not interested in looking run down.

At this stage, we’re exploring surgical facial rejuvenation to restore our beautiful, natural jaw line and reestablish the youthful fullness of our cheeks. We may combine surgical procedures with fillers to restore additional volume loss in our faces or with a nose reshaping procedure to smooth the bridge and refine our profile.

mid-fifties

Most popular procedures:

- Medical skin care
- Light-based treatments
- Injectable fillers
- Dermabrasion
- Facial rejuvenation
- Forehead lift/brow lift
- Nose reshaping
- Microdermabrasion
- Chemical peel
- Laser skin resurfacing
- Breast augmentation/lift
- Facelift
- Neck lift
- Tummy tuck
- Laser hair removal
- Botox
- Sclerotherapy
- Breast reduction
- Eyelid surgery
- Skin tightening
- Liposuction
These days life doesn’t grind to a halt after age 65—far from it. We’re working, volunteering, traveling, and taking advantage of our expanded leisure time.

We are seeking to build on our previous cosmetic procedures to rejuvenate our faces with a second facelift combined with a brow lift, chin implants, forehead lift, and neck lift.

We also may consider liposuction and other contouring procedures, such as a tummy tuck and liposuction, to reduce excess skin and restore definition and tone.

mid-sixties
and looking ahead

Most popular procedures:

- Microdermabrasion
- Botox
- Sclerotherapy
- Facial rejuvenation
- Forehead lift/brow lift
- Liposuction
- Laser hair removal
- Injectable fillers
- Dermabrasion
- Facelift
- Neck lift
- Chemical peel
- Laser skin resurfacing
- Breast reduction/lift
- Eyelid surgery
- Skin tightening
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Anyone with a medical degree can claim to be qualified to perform cosmetic procedures. The first and most important step before you undertake any procedure is selecting a qualified plastic surgeon you can trust. Choose a member of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery or an ASPS Member Surgeon.

**members of these organizations:**

- Are board-certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery® or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®
- Completed at least five years of surgical training following medical school, with a minimum of two years of plastic surgery residency training
- Successfully passed rigorous written and oral examinations administered by the American Board of Plastic Surgery or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- Completed continuing medical education, including patient safety training each year
- Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified surgical facilities
- Adhere to a strict code of ethics
When it comes to cosmetic medical care it’s not always easy to know where to begin. Plastic surgeons, because they are the complete “go-to” resource for great outcomes in cosmetic medicine and surgery, are the best professionals with whom to start. The following questions will help you define your health and beauty plans so that you can locate and consult a highly qualified ASPS Member Surgeon or Member of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. Working with your plastic surgeon will bring you one step closer to achieving your Beauty for Life goals.
questions to ask yourself:

- Am I physically healthy, eating right, and not smoking?
- Do I have realistic expectations for the results of my procedure?
- Am I exploring plastic surgery for myself or to fit someone else’s ideals?
- Have I spent time testing my knowledge about plastic surgery and exploring the qualifications of plastic surgeons?
- Have I told my plastic surgeon about medical conditions, drug allergies, and medical treatments (including past treatments with fillers, facial shaping, and Botox)?
- Have I reviewed with my plastic surgeon my current use of medicines, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, and drugs?
- Am I ready to do my part to ensure the success of my procedure?
- Do I know the procedure’s after-effects and recovery time?
- Have all my questions been thoroughly addressed by my plastic surgeon?
questions to ask your plastic surgeon:

- Are you a member of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery or the American Society of Plastic Surgeons?
- Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- Do you have hospital privileges to perform my procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- Is the surgical facility accredited by a nationally or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- What is the length of the recovery period, and what kind of recovery help will I need?
- How long can I expect the results to last?
- Are there alternative procedures I could consider and what are the pros and cons?
- Who on your staff will be performing my procedure and what are their qualifications?
- What risks and complications are associated with my procedure and how are they handled?
- What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the outcome?
- Do you have before-and-after photos that illustrate this procedure and show results that are reasonable for me to expect?
While there are many advertisements claiming the existence of “miracle” products and procedures, your cosmetic medicine options are best determined in consultation with a plastic surgeon. Plastic surgeons remain your most reliable resource for excellent, up-to-date information on scientifically based and safe treatments that are designed to produce high-quality outcomes and Beauty for Life.

Consult www.plasticsurgery.org (ASPS) and www.surgery.org (ASAPS) to:

- Find a board-certified plastic surgeon and gain further knowledge of the full array of available procedures
- View patient photos
- Become knowledgeable about what cosmetic medicine and surgery can do for you throughout your life
- Learn about financing options
The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) and The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) are dedicated to advancing quality care in plastic surgery by encouraging high standards in training, ethics, physician practice, research, and continuing medical education. ASPS and ASAPS members are certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery in the United States and its territories or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.
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