

A Younger, More Youthful

While no one can escape the hands of time, it may be possible to look like we're beating the clock. Advancements in nonsurgical skincare treatments continue to offer more ways to achieve firmer, smoother and younger looking skin, as well as provide a 'lift' for a more youthful appearance.

"Skin tightening devices for the face, eyelids and body that use radiofrequency or ultrasound waves are gaining popularity, as there is no downtime, it is more affordable and has a better safety profile than the surgical alternatives," says Dr. Kristen Rice, a dermatologist at the Center for Dermatology and Utica Square Skin Care in Tulsa. "We offer Thermage at our office for this purpose."

Thermage is a non-invasive radiofrequency therapy that helps smooth lines and wrinkles, as well as remodel collagen to improve the overall health of skin.

Dr. Rice shares that some of the most common skin complaints include dry, itchy skin and acne, but in her practice she mostly encounters concerns about brown spots and general skin discoloration.

"Chemical peels are quite effective for the majority of facial skin discoloration," says Dr. Rice. "There are also resurfacing procedures that can help to even skin tone and also smooth skin texture such as Clear + Brilliant and Fraxel Dual non-ablative resurfacing. Additionally, light-based treatments such as BBL BroadBand Light provide a non-invasive treatment with minimal to no downtime for improvement of skin discoloration, particularly brown spots and increased vascularity, both on and off the face."

She adds that the most important thing you can address in caring for your skin is protection from harmful ultraviolet light. Her top three recommendations for general skin care include daily sunscreen use on exposed areas such as the face, neck, chest and hands, nightly use of a topical retinoid and antioxidants including vitamin C and E, as well as a variety of other effective antioxidants to help improve the health of skin over time.

Dermatologist Dr. Jeff Alexander is the owner and medical director of the Skin Care Institute medical spa in Tulsa. He explains that

By Rebecca Fast

You

How nonsurgical skin treatments can take years off your appearance.

Micro-Needling, Micropeels and HydraFacials have gained popularity over the past few years and have replaced services like microdermabrasion.

"We stopped performing microdermabrasion in our medical spa, Skin Care Institute, about eight years ago as new, less abrasive treatments hit the market and were deemed more beneficial," he says.

"Micro-Needling is a great treatment for all skin types, with no downtime and can be done in the summer months as well."


Dr. Alexander offers Micro-Needling with the Eclipse MicroPen which uses tiny needles to create painless micro-injuries to the skin to help increase collagen production and elastin and reduce the appearance of wrinkles, acne scars, stretch marks, hyperpigmentation and enlarged pores.

While Botox and dermal fillers continue to be choice procedures for many, Dr. Alexander emphasizes that it's important for patients to be educated on these options, adding that his patients receive customized plans.

"No two patients are injected alike as no two faces are alike," says Dr. Alexander. "Voluma is a wonderful new dermal filler for the cheeks that can lift the entire lower half of the face instantaneously. It also gives a very natural look that patients love. Botox is described to our patients as a muscle stabilizer to stop those repetitive motion injuries that we tend to make over time with our facial expressions. We still want to make sure that patients retain expression in their faces without causing injury to the epidermis, creating a natural look."

According to Dr. Tim R. Love, a plastic surgeon and owner of Tim R. Love Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery in Oklahoma City, nonsurgical procedures are on the rise nationally. He most recently introduced the Profound system (the latest in radiofrequency micro-needling technology) to create new elastin, collagen and hyaluronic acid.

"These building blocks work to create dermal volume often depleted with aging," says Dr. Love. "Skin laxity can see improvement in nasolabial folds, cheeks, marionette lines, jawline, neck and décolleté." He shares that Fraxel Dual and Thermage CPT continue to



provide reliable results for resurfacing and tightening while Botox and injectable fillers are also effective in slowing the aging process.

“A new combination of Fraxel Dual and Radiesse has become popular for literally turning back ‘the hands of time’ with a hand treatment,” says Dr. Love.

Other nonsurgical treatments available to target specific trouble areas include Ultherapy, Coolsculpting and Kybella.

“Ultherapy is an amazing non-invasive procedure for the face, neck and décolleté, using ultrasound technology to generate heat,” says Dr. Alexander. “That heat is delivered 4.5 mm deep into the fibromuscular layer, as well as 1.5 mm and 3.0 mm into the dermis. The heat that is delivered creates injury which, in turn, kicks in the body’s own collagen response.”

Ultherapy helps thicken skin, as well as lifting and tightening.

“Outside of surgery there is no other treatment that delivers deeper than Ultherapy,” explains Dr. Alexander. “It is considered the gold standard in the medical spa field for lifting and tightening.”

CoolSculpting is a fat-freezing procedure that works to contour the body by freezing away unwanted fat. Dr. Alexander notes that it works extremely well with the right candidates.

“CoolSculpting is non-invasive and works without the risk that surgery can bring,” he says. “It also creates a more even result, not always obtainable with liposuction. With CoolSculpting and now Dual Sculpting, we can treat most areas of the body even faster, including stomach, flanks, bra-line, inner thigh, outer thigh, chest (men), arms and double chin.”

Another popular treatment to tackle a double chin is Kybella.

“Kybella is an injectable that delivers a fat seeking molecule (deoxycholic acid) to the fat cell, which in turn destroys those fat cells over the course of six to eight weeks,” says Dr. Alexander. “Patients may need up to four treatments for optimal results. Eliminating the double chin can really change the overall appearance of the face. It sharpens up the entire jaw line and makes patients look thinner and younger.”

Before choosing any skincare treatment, Dr. Alexander encourages patients to seek out a reputable medical spa that has a physician onsite, preferably a dermatologist, or someone in a related field who understands skincare. ■



The Mommy Makeover

A cosmetic combo to regain your pre-baby body.

Pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding can have lasting effects on a woman's body. Changes can include stretch marks, loose skin and sagging breasts. Many women are often disappointed or self-conscious of their post-baby physique and seek out a combination of cosmetic procedures to help improve their appearance. It's a decision that now has a trendy name: the mommy makeover.

"The term 'mommy makeover' has become popular over the past several years but is really not a new approach to post-pregnancy revision surgery," says Dr. Tim R. Love, a plastic surgeon and owner of Tim R. Love Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery in Oklahoma City. "The popularity and familiarity

of the term has undoubtedly increased the number of women seeking out improvement in their post-pregnancy body condition."

He adds that although each patient is unique, the individual procedures within a makeover can include breast enhancement (augmentation, augmentation/lift, lift or reduction), tummy tuck and liposuction.

"Although not a requirement, it is wise for a patient to be finished with having children when considering any component of a 'mommy makeover' surgery," says Dr. Love. "We also advise patients to wait until they are as near their ideal weight as possible, post-pregnancy, to ensure that they receive the optimum benefit from surgery."

Dr. Angelo Cuzalina, a cosmetic surgeon and owner of Tulsa Surgical Arts, shares that ideally, a woman should wait until she has no plans for more children and has completely stopped breastfeeding for at least three months. In addition, depending on what procedures are chosen, women have the option of having their surgeries at the same time.

"The majority of women choose to do all the procedures at the same time for multiple reasons such as lower cost, one anesthesia, less time off work and convenience," says Dr. Cuzalina. "The key is to make sure they are healthy enough for a simultaneous opera-

tion. The classic ‘mommy makeover’ at my office is simultaneous breast lift (mastopexy) and augmentation (implants), full abdominoplasty (tummy tuck) and typically associated liposuction of the waist, hips and pubis. The two additional procedures we also perform on specific patients are labiaplasty and/or vaginalplasty for women who also want excess labial minora reduced or to tighten their vaginal canal, especially if they had tears or an episiotomy.”

According to Dr. Cuzalina, a nonsurgical procedure that women may also choose to add to their makeover experience is a ThermiVa treatment. ThermiVa uses radiofrequency to treat internal and external anatomical features of the vagina.

Dr. Mark Mathers, a plastic surgeon and owner of the Center for Plastic Surgery in Tulsa, says he is currently seeing a trend where people have stayed in shape but they have loose skin—whether from having children or dramatic weight loss.

“You can be in shape but if you have loose skin, you have loose skin. Working out five times a day for five days a week isn’t going to change it,” says Dr. Mathers. “For moms, I tell them to be at the weight they are comfortable with and then afterward, don’t plan on losing more than five to 10 pounds at the most. The last thing you want to do is have cosmetic surgery and then lose weight because you take away from what’s been done—especially with a breast lift. If you have a breast lift and then lose 15 pounds, it’s probably going to affect your breast lift more than, perhaps, an abdominoplasty. I can only do so much. If you lose weight and have a healthy lifestyle it’s going to compliment any procedures you’ve had done.”

Dr. Mathers emphasizes the importance for individuals to research their options before choosing a surgeon and notes that he uses pictures of patients he has operated on, instead of industry photos, to show patients potential results.

“I spend a lot of time with my patients discussing realistic expectations. We discuss what they want, what procedures we are going to do to accomplish it and then what realistic results we’ll achieve,” says Dr. Mathers. “The biggest problem is getting people to accept the amount of downtime that’s required to successfully recover after surgery. Patients need to have someone to assist them in taking care of their family or other responsibilities during this time.”

As with any surgery, taking the time to fully heal is critical to avoiding possible complications.

“I tell my patients that, on average, they will be extremely sore the first two weeks, generally back to mostly full exercise at six weeks but final shrinkage of all edema can be as long as eight months and scars tend to improve for at least one year,” says Dr. Cuzalina. “Most patients after a ‘mommy makeover’ return to work between 10 to 14 days if they can be on ‘light duty.’ Everyone heals differently and has varying levels of pain tolerance. Plus, if they have areas that heal more slowly than others it can be longer.”

Once a woman has had a makeover, maintaining an overall healthy lifestyle to control weight and stay fit is essential in sustaining their new look.

“Tummy tuck and liposuction patients must understand that neither procedure is intended to be a weight loss tool,” says Dr. Love. “Therefore, patients must be diligent to adopt healthy eating and exercise regimens to maintain their investment.”

Dr. Cuzalina recommends a healthy, low carb diet with exercise to his patients and stresses that gaining weight after liposuction isn’t good for their health since fat deposition can be in other areas like the intestines, liver or heart.

“But, the good news is the opposite is true, in that if they lose a little weight after a ‘mommy makeover’ the fat proportionally can now burn more off the same critical areas (intra-abdominal regions),” says Dr. Cuzalina.

■ REBECCA FAST

A LITTLE FIX HERE A LITTLE FIX THERE.

Plastic surgery and dermatology trends and services are always changing – just like personal tastes. Below we’ve compiled a list of new, up-and-coming and unique procedures you might have never known you’ve needed.

Laser Tattoo Removal

That tattoo seemed like a good idea at the time. As more and more Americans get permanent ink, more and more are eager to have their tattoos removed when life circumstances change. Laser treatments are increasingly available both locally and around the country. The laser beams target specific tattoo ink colors and breaks them down over the course of the treatment. Most professional tattoos require at least 10 sessions to completely remove the ink according to a report from *Reuters Health*. Common factors impacting the cost of a removal include the size of the tattoo, color of the tattoo and age of the tattoo.

Stretched Ear Piercing Repair

Another trend of stretching one’s ear lobes can lead to a sizable investment of time and money should one decide to repair them. The lobes can be surgically repaired under local anesthesia in approximately an hour, but pricing will take into account the complexity of the case.

Bra Line Back Lift

This procedure is for those who, despite diet and exercise, cannot get the stubborn bulges to, well, budge from the upper back area. During the outpatient procedure, done under general anesthesia, fat and skin in the affected area is removed. Patients should expect to take it easy for at least two weeks after the procedure.

Belly Button Makeovers

Umbilicoplasty procedures alter the look of a belly button after weight changes, pregnancy or umbilical hernias. While the patient is under local anesthesia, the surgeon is able to make a small incision to either remove excess skin or overhang abdominal skin to the top of the belly button. Patients can anticipate a small amount of swelling and bruising.

Dimple Creation

Always dreamed of dimples? Now you – and modern medicine – can make it happen. Cheek dimple creation (dimpleplasty) is performed with local anesthesia and usually takes less than an hour. The incision is made inside the mouth itself so there are no scars evident. Costs for the procedure will depend on the complexities of the case and the level of anesthesia involved.

Eyelash Transplants

Just like it sounds – this procedure involves the surgeon implanting individual hair follicles (usually taken from the back of the patient’s scalp) onto the eyelid using a curved needle. These eyelashes will need maintenance as they are growing hairs. According to *Newsweek*, the procedure can cost up to \$3,000 per eyelid. – Elizabeth Wozobski