Cosmetic surgery has been given a facelift

Plastic surgeon Anthony Barabas discusses the latest trends in cosmetic surgery for 2018.

The buzzword at the beginning of 2018 is ‘natural’ — as in look natural. Breast augmentation requests are generally for smaller breast implants, with the average implant size reducing from around 500cc to between 300-400cc in my clinics. More women are asking for implants to be placed under the muscles (dual-plane) to disguise the upper edge of the implant, and there’s even an increasing trend towards teardrop shaped ‘anatomical’ implants, although demand for these remains much less than for round implants.

LESS IS MORE

Breast reduction surgery can be life-changing and liberating; life-changing by reducing back, neck and shoulder pain, and liberating women to move more freely, perform sport and wear clothes that fit. However, older reduction techniques, leaving anchor-shaped scars, focus more on reducing the volume than on the final shape of the breast. Having spent time training in Australia, South Africa and Canada, I’m now a firm believer in vertical scar breast reduction techniques. Not only do these give you much less scarring, but also give a much more pleasing natural appearance to the final shape of your breasts.

In upper eyelid surgery there’s been a shift away from fat removal which often gave a sunken appearance to the eye. Instead, fat can be sculpted and repositioned when tightening the eyelids by removing excess skin. In contrast, most of my lower eyelid treatments remain non-surgical, using fillers to reduce the look of tired eyes. However, Botox to the forehead, frown lines and sides of the eyes (crow’s feet) remains my most popular non-surgical treatment, followed by laser removal of moles and facial thread veins.

IN GOOD SHAPE

Body contouring procedures are possibly the exception to the ‘less is more’ trend. Abdominoplasty (tummy tuck) is now frequently combined with liposuction to the flanks and other areas. I prefer laser liposuction as it tightens the tissues and skin in addition to fat removal. In fact, the increasingly popular ‘Brazilian’ tummy tuck puts an emphasis on recontouring the whole abdomen through liposuction before then removing excess tissue and skin tightening. ‘Mommy makeover’ is the term used when abdominoplasty is combined with breast surgery (augmentation or reduction) reducing the overall cost and length of time needed to recover.

MEN SEEK SURGERY

I also expect to see a continued increase in men requesting cosmetic surgery in 2018. Men increasingly approach me for facial rejuvenating procedures, in particular eyelid surgery and pinning back the ears (pinna-plasty). Treatment of ‘man boobs’ (gynaecomastia) is now commonplace and is no longer a taboo subject. Similarly, labiaplasty is now discussed more openly among female patients, often sharing the functional and, for some, the aesthetic improvements online, such as on the RealSelf website. In fact, a major factor increasing demand for cosmetic surgery over recent years is how easily the internet allows people to search and read up on treatments they’re embarrassed to discuss in open conversation. Websites, chat rooms and even the ability to email surgeons directly from their homepage have broken down these barriers, and made cosmetic surgery available to many, not just the few.

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