

BEAUTY BY APPOINTMENT



Over the past several years, there has been a change in attitude when it comes to cosmetic surgery.

"You can't ignore all the media attention," says Dr. A. Michael Sadove, professor of plastic surgery at the Indiana University School of Medicine.

All the attention may have dispelled some misconceptions about the pain, recovery time and results associated with cosmetic surgery — causing more people to seek it, says Dr. Mark Hamilton, a local facial plastic surgeon.

But which came first — the media attention or the popularity of cosmetic surgery? Local cosmetic surgeon Dr. Janet K. Turkle says she's not sure. People today feel younger and want to look as good as they feel, she says.

"I am not sure whether the television shows have engendered the acceptance or the acceptance has engendered the shows," Turkle says. "I think it is a kind of hand-in-hand thing. What the shows have done is enhance awareness. Patients come in today much better informed."

Over the past several years, there has been a change in attitude when it comes to cosmetic surgery, says Dr. William Beeson, a facial cosmetic surgeon who practices in Carmel. People want to avoid aging in a manner that is convenient for them, and the industry is responding, he says.

"We find that because so many people are so active, they want procedures that fit into their lifestyles. They don't want something that has a long healing time," Beeson says.

"There is an expansion of the quick in-and-out things that are safe, cost effective,

have little discomfort and allow them to resume their normal activities almost immediately. At the same time, we are seeing a real growth in the major procedures," he says.

"I always tell people that surgery takes care of sags and bags and that chemical peels or laser surgery or dermal filler take care of wrinkles."

Beeson cites a study by Botox-maker Allergan Inc. on people's attitudes in regard to cosmetic surgery. The study found 81 percent of people rate physical appearance as important, and 32 percent rate it as very

important. Roughly 82 percent of people in the study said they would have cosmetic surgery to please themselves, while only 44 percent said they would have it done to please their spouse or partner.

Sadove sees additional reasons for the increased interest in cosmetic surgery.

"There has been some pent-up demand and now that the economy is getting better, that is reflected in the numbers," Sadove says.

The most compelling reason to have cosmetic surgery might be the results, he adds. "It works."

Nose reshaping (rhinoplasty), liposuction, breast augmentation, eyelid surgery (blepharoplasty) and face-lifts topped the list in 2003 for the most popular surgical procedures among women. The fastest-growing procedure was the buttock lift, up 74 percent from 2002.

The top five procedures among men were nose reshaping, eyelid surgery, liposuction, hair transplantation and face-lifts.

Statistics also suggest that many people seek cosmetic surgery at a time when the signs of aging or damage from the sun begin to show up on their faces and bodies. Forty percent of cosmetic surgery patients in 2003 were between the ages of 35 and 50, and liposuction was the most popular procedure among this age group. Among patients ages 51 to 64, eyelid surgery topped the list of procedures.

Those who have had cosmetic surgery once are likely to have it again. Last year, almost one-third of all patients underwent multiple