

COMBINING YOUR MEDICAL PROCEDURE WITH A COSMETIC PROCEDURE

If you have always dreamed about having a cosmetic procedure done but felt you couldn't afford it, keep in mind that if you need a procedure like skin cancer removal or carpal tunnel surgery, you can save significant amounts of money by having a cosmetic procedure at the same time. Since the surgery center or hospital and the anesthesiologist are getting paid for the medically necessary procedure, they will usually offer a discounted fee for the extra time in the operating room.

If you are interested in this, don't be afraid to ask about it – it is not an imposition. It makes sense to recover from anesthesia and surgery one time rather than from two separate surgeries. Finally, it is not only safer to have only one anesthetic than two, it's almost certainly less discomfort overall. It can really be an opportunity for you to get something positive out of a seemingly negative situation.

A quick neat story – last month a pretty young woman was sent over to our office with a large defect over her eyelid and eyebrow after removal of a basal cell skin cancer at the dermatologist. She also had quite a lot of extra eyelid skin on both sides. We were able to remove the extra eyelid skin on the opposite side to use it for a skin graft over the open wound, and perform a minor tailoring on the skin grafted side to result in bilateral upper blepharoplasty. Her overall appearance was better than before her cancer removal!

So remember, this is cheaper, safer, and saves you time. Please give us ample time to schedule these combination procedures.

The only caveat is that in general, it is best to keep general anesthesia procedures to a reasonable amount of time – one shouldn't get too much done at once.

GLIMMERGLASS PRODUCTS

Scientifically based and clinically proven, GLIMMERGLASS anti-aging products utilize active ingredients such as antioxidants, algae peptides, active peptides and beta hydroxy acids in ideal levels that assure real skin improvement. These specialized products work to reduce the effects of environmental stress and aging, strengthening skin's elastin fibers and boosting collagen production, dramatically rejuvenating the appearance of the skin. Make an appointment to visit our cosmetology suite for more information.



GLIMMERGLASS skin care offers dermatologist formulated revolutionary, products that are only available through doctors and skin care professionals around the world.

Make an appointment today to discuss your options and ask Dr. Rayfield how GLIMMERGLASS

COST OF BOTOX AND FILLERS

Recently I was shocked to learn what people have paid for Botox™ and fillers at salons and spas - sometimes \$3,000 to \$4,000 for forehead Botox and a syringe or two of Restylane. These procedures at my office would be approximately one-half that! What I'm trying to convey is that while you may feel comfortable in a familiar salon or spa setting, you may actually be short-changing yourself on aesthetics, quality, expertise and certainly cost. Rather than placing yourself at risk, consider instead putting yourself in the hands of an experienced professional in an office setting.

Here are some Botox guidelines:

- The cost base of Botox™ is \$10-\$20 per unit. A full vial of Botox contains 100 units. Be certain to ask how many units you will be getting
- Generally the per unit charge is more for small amounts.
- I think a full forehead and "crows feet" treatment takes about 100 units, a full vial. (That's more than most doctors' use.)
- I use about 30 units for the frown lines, sometimes less will do
- Beware of places that offer inexpensive treatments - they may be using either old or diluted material. While opened Botox can be stored in the refrigerator for several days and still keep its activity, its viability decreases over time

The manufacturer, Allergan, has again raised the price of a vial of Botox™. It is now \$525, whereas seven years ago it was about \$300. The standard fillers - Juvederm™, Restylane®, Radiesse® and Sculptra™ all cost us \$300-\$500 per syringe. Extended time spent may increase the charge, however the usual fee is about twice the cost of the material. I've heard of absurd charges like \$1,000 to \$1,200 for one syringe of Restylane – for which we charge less than \$600 in our office!

HAND REJUVENATION

"My hands give away my age"

If your hands are wrinkly and covered with brown spots, you will be happy to know that we can plump up the back of your hand with Radiesse—a filler that lasts about one year—and lighten those brown spots significantly with a 10 minute office visit! I've tried it on myself and the discomfort is minimal and there is no down time.

Amazingly, it only takes one shot in the back of each hand. There are no dressings or after care.

Check this out on the internet

A recent insightful article appeared in the Jan/Feb issue of Health Magazine describing the scariest new health trend "Gynos Removing Wrinkles" go to www.Health.com

In Our Next Issue:

In-Office Chemical peels
Combining facial rejuvenation surgeries
Non-Surgical Skin Tightening

IMPROVING SCARS

Whenever there is an incision in the skin, a scar will result. The scar may be very good—a fine line—or it can be red, widened, or bumpy. As plastic surgeons, we try to minimize scarring by hiding the incisions in the hair or along a natural skin crease, doing a several layer closure, and avoiding tension, but truthfully, the way an individual heals will be the most important factor in determining scar quality.

If you are a great healer, you will probably get a fine line no matter how you treat your wound. If your incision is not showing any redness and is nice and soft, there is nothing you can do to make it better. If your incision is red, bumpy, and angry, there are some things that might help.

Despite what you might have heard, very few topical agents have been proven to improve wound healing. Since most scars improve over time, it is hard to judge whether something put on your scar is really effecting the change. Seldom will you see a sudden change in a scar for the better.

There are some general principles about managing your incisions and scars:

- It will not hurt your incision if you wash it or get it wet – cleaning your wound is good for it
- It is OK to leave the wound uncovered or to cover it
- Mederma, Scar Guard, Vitamin E, and Cortisone cream all may help scars a little bit
- Incisions on the central chest, back, and shoulders tend not to heal as well as other areas
- Incisions closed with dissolving sutures stay redder longer than those closed with removable sutures
- The four most effective means of treating red, bumpy scars are pressure and massage, cortisone injections, x-ray treatments and silicone sheeting

Pressure and massage are always the way to start. If that fails, injections of steroids into the scar are the next step. It will usually help quite quickly. X-ray treatments are reserved for only the most difficult cases (there are long-term draw backs). Silicone gel sheeting can be bought at a drug store and takes a few months to work.

Scars that have widened cannot be improved with any method except surgery. The scar needs to be excised and the defect closed with plastic surgery techniques. Slightly raised or uneven scars can be improved with laser resurfacing or dermabrasion. This is an in-office procedure that takes only a few minutes, but there are some open areas that take 7-8 days to heal.

There are some lasers that will help reduce the redness in some scars. This is a relatively simple process, but does not work every time and several treatments are required. Deeply indented scars also cannot be greatly improved without surgery. These scars are best excised and resutured.

Each scar may be assessed individually to determine how much it can be improved with surgery. One scar might have a 90% chance of 50% improvement, while another scar might have a 10% chance of 90% improvement. Unfortunately, there is never a guarantee about the final result. We like to wait at least 6 months before revising scars, since often they improve for some time. Scar revision surgery is not covered by your insurance unless the scar is causing a medical problem, was caused by a car wreck, or resulted from work.

Cosmetic Surgery Insights

Cosmetic Surgery Insights

MORE ABOUT SCULPTRA

I've mentioned Sculptra™ in previous newsletters, but it is such a powerful tool that it deserves more press.

To review, it is a material that is injected to increase volume in areas that have lost fat or have deflated, most commonly the cheeks and under the eyes and the temples. When these areas get hollow, they need more than just 1 or 2 syringes of Restylane or Juvederm to fill them up. Sculptra will give you the larger volume you need to restore a youthful fullness to the area. It gives a lifting effect to the area that's more powerful than surgery. I now have a number of patients that have had a satisfactory correction with just one treatment. It usually lasts 2 years, even up to 5 years.

Sculptra, while approved by the FDA, has not been cleared for cosmetic uses—they are hoping to get approval in the fall. This means that using it for reasons other than replacing fat in the cheeks of chronically ill patients is an "off label" use. This does not mean that it is illegal. Physicians are permitted to use devices, medications and materials for different purposes other than those studied if it is in the patient's best interest. In my view Sculptra is far safer and more effective, than surgical procedures aiming at trying to accomplish the same goals of restoring shape to the face.

Understand that injecting Sculptra is a real art, and requires experience and an in-depth knowledge of anatomy. In fact, the company now only sells its product to dermatologists and plastic surgeons. They will not sell Sculptra to salons or spas. A training course is now required before using it. Sculptra is a very important weapon in our armory of fillers for fighting the aging face!

VOLUME II, ISSUE 1 WINTER



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I invite your questions, comments
and suggestions for new topics