

The 2005 Facelift Approach:

A little nip and tuck, now and then,
for 20-, 30- and 40-somethings;
More extensive surgery for others



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Today's state of the art approach to facial cosmetic surgery is at a level that allows maintaining a youthful appearance for many years without the sense that aging is occurring.

Over the last 30 years, women waited until their 50s or 60s and then requested facelifts to correct the ravages of aging. But today's 20- and 30-somethings are already beginning to make minor changes that ward off the aging process. This paradigm shift has been fueled by the precision that is now applied to the facelift procedure. Formerly, the operation was not much more than a strong pull of the loose skin of the cheeks and neck to a point behind the ears, allowing the excess skin to be trimmed off. The philosophy of that operation is history today. The ideal way to view facial cosmetic surgery is to think

of it as a minimally invasive, unobtrusive continual process that begins before there are visible signs of aging.

It is very much like the aging process itself. Aging begins even before growth ceases at the end of adolescence, however the visible signs are not usually significant until the fourth decade of life. Aging is a relentless process, never stopping, slowing down for periods but always returning to build upon its prior effects. In past times when a hair fell out or a wrinkle developed, the result was lasting. The only solution was to cover it up with make-up or a wig.

The early surgical procedures were very crude by current standards. Sagging skin was corrected by tugging and pulling the skin until it looked like the nylon-covered face of a bank robber or a television reporter's face filmed live during a coastal hurricane. Skin roughness

was limited to either grinding away at the surface with a spinning wire brush or searing the surface with chemicals that left a permanent chalky white tone.

Today, we can reverse the signs of aging with more sophisticated methods, but the much-preferred course of action is to prevent these from developing in the first place. We can keep skin healthy with a medicine chest of topical drugs. Little tucks and nips are considered at an appropriate time, based on personalized aging patterns that are mapped out like a satellite scanning the Earth's contours.

The last 30 years of performing facelifts has given us many valuable advances. The entire face has been studied by separating it into small finite areas and evaluating how each of these areas shows patterns of aging. During the initial consultation, your plastic surgeon is looking at the patterns that exist on *your* face and designing a treatment plan accordingly.

Georgia Plastic Surgery's Philosophy for Patient Service Excellence

In addition to recommending a customized approach for your specific cosmetic surgery need, Dr. Lincenberg, the nursing staff and the patient coordinator, make a special effort to know their patients so they can better anticipate and respond to their concerns. Whether it's simply answering the patient's questions, or providing extras such as patient medications, "comfort kits" designed specifically for each procedure, or cutting edge pain management techniques, Georgia Plastic Surgery ensures that each patient's experience is a very positive one.

The patient who comes in at a relatively young age will have subtle changes in some areas and no signs of aging in other areas. Therefore, recommendations for the younger patient include much less involved, highly focused surgical techniques. Recovery is always quicker and the degree of bruising, swelling and pain are always much less.

Conversely, there are still many patients that did not think to begin the process of "prejuvenation" during young adulthood. These patients are now in their 50s or older and they are finally serious about facial cosmetic surgery. More often than not, the ravages of time have taken their toll on the forehead, eyelids, cheeks, lips and neck. At this point, surgical rejuvenation is a more extensive undertaking, sometimes even requiring a pair of surgeries.

Many patients who come in on a regular basis for skin treatments stay up-to-date on the latest surgical techniques. When they feel ready for a rejuvenating procedure, they are already informed and can plan their schedules to minimize the impact on their busy lives. Some patients talk with me about a procedure for several years before they actually plan to have it. This preparation brings a strong sense of security and confidence in the results of the surgery.

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