

What do Men really want?

Gold Coast cosmetic medicine practitioner **DR JOHN FLYNN** looks at men's cosmetic surgery options.



You've seen the movie 'What Women Want' with Mel and Helen jousting their way through corporate intrigues. But what is it that men want? What are they lining up for in the cosmetic medicine field?

Cosmetic surgery has always been thought of as a woman's domain and, in statistical terms, this is still so. But the guys are catching up fast. Men's interests and requirements are quite different in many respects. This is because they are from Mars!

FROWNS

Commonly men are seeking out the muscle relaxing injections we are not allowed to name but whose name everybody knows. This is particularly good for the frown lines. Men tend to have a much more developed brow muscle and a thicker and straighter eyebrow which can easily give a stern look. In evolutionary terms this was important to produce a fierce countenance to warn off potential rivals but not so useful these days. The muscle relaxing injections soften this well, but it is important to place the injections differently than in women so that the male character of the eyebrow area is not lost. In women we aim to achieve an elevated and arched eyebrow but in men this result would be out of place.

SKIN CARE

Younger males have come to see the benefits of good skin care when managing acne and have come to see these types of treatments as less daunting as they have grown older. Microdermabrasion, chemical peels and good skin care

products like the fruit acids are gaining a lot of acceptance in men's routines. The guys have a distinct advantage here of course that many just don't realise. The girls often complain that men seem to age better (in some cases) and this is partly because their facial skin is thicker and coarser and so can withstand the environment a little better and secondly most men undergo a fairly severe dermabrasion/ exfoliation on a daily basis. It's called shaving.

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A big problem for guys generally is that many more work outdoors and so are much more exposed to harmful sunlight and therefore are at greater risk of skin cancer. Sunscreens assume much more importance in this situation and the guys really should all have a night time skin repair routine that is easy to administer, and there are a number of alternatives here which really only involve a nightly wash and an application of a therapeutic substance. Once the photodamage and skin cancer have occurred a rescue routine is all the more important but again not unnecessarily daunting.

FACIAL SURGERY

With this emerging awareness and acceptance men are becoming more emboldened to seek cosmetic surgery advice. Facelifts still do not figure greatly with men although the rates are steadily rising. It is important though for the operator and the patient to be aware of the anatomical difference and the cultural requirements of the Mars/ Venus factor. In other words, one cannot just give the same facelift to a male as a female. Because it is important to preserve the "maleness" of the face. This is so even in those males who wish to have "softening" of their features. The facial surgical requirements in gender reassignment are quite different though and constitute a special case. In my experience it is the heterosexual male in the 50 – 60 age group who most often enquires about facial surgery, facelifts, brows, eyelid rejuvenation, neck tightening and facial lipo. Loose neck tissue or 'turkey neck' is much more common in men and can present particular challenges.

It is worth noting that there are instances where medicare rebates apply to facial surgery. For example in severe acne scarring different procedures attract a rebate, including laser treatments, laser or peels in some instances of severe sun damage, upper eyelid surgery where the redundant skin obscures vision. On this last point, even if you are not considering eyelid surgery, if your upper lids are say, resting on your eyelashes then your range of vision is compromised especially in low light situations and this could constitute a driving hazard.

IMPLANTS

Men have implants too! Yes, some do have breast augmentations for special reasons but many more have pectoral implants to enhance the ideal shape. Calf implants also are increasing in popularity for the same reason. Buttock implants, biceps, penile enlargements – gives a whole new meaning to the term " Body Building" doesn't it?

LIPOSCULPTURE

Where women are more interested in hips and thighs, with men it is abdomen and 'love handles'. Men simply store fat in different areas. It is just as difficult to fix with diet and exercise. Mind you, lipo is not meant to replace good diet

and good lifestyle. It is designed to change a shape or contour. The biggest impediment for the guys is that they don't like wearing the special garment afterwards. It is only for a few weeks, fellas!

VEINS

Varicose veins have always been male problems and sclerotherapy (injections) is gaining better acceptance in men who once opted for more invasive surgery. Sclerotherapy is a preferred method of treatment of varicose veins in most circumstances. The smaller leg veins are much less common in males. They seem to be more of a gender item. Those that do occur are often hidden by hairy legs and so don't present much of a problem.

Facial veins however are very common in men and of course they don't cover well with make up do they guys? This problem is usually a result of sun damage or skin conditions like rosacea. The use of newer 'non burning' lasers makes treatment of these facial vessels much easier and more effective.

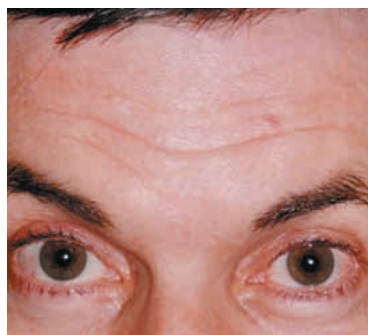
What is not that popular with men are the various collagen replacement injections. Except in managing some acne scarring I don't see too many males for these injections. I guess bigger lips are just not that much of an attraction for the guys, or girls, as the case may be. But then Elvis had a good set (of lips that is) didn't he? **BWFM**



Before



AFTER treatment of acne scarring by Dr Flynn.



Before



AFTER treatment of acne scarring by Dr Flynn.