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the scalpel. can wait

Today the aesthetic enhancement of the face is distinctively divided into surgical and non-surgical. Large plastic surgery practices in the US and across Europe will encompass within their practices a non-surgical division as it has been shown with numerous studies that combination treatments will give the most optimal results. Celebrities that appear in our magazines and on the red carpet for major events are not relying on surgery alone. Technological advances in light and laser has allowed the attending medical clinician to reverse the signs of ageing, delaying the need for surgery and affording the patient a glowing healthy younger looking and feeling skin – “The Youthful Glow”.

By adding to this a number of other scientifically proven ‘anti-ageing’ tools to ones arsenal it is possible for any individual today to look harmonious and at peace amongst our colleagues, peers, friends and family.

More importantly we have the chance to look on the outside as we feel on the inside.

Today the teaching for surgical and non-surgical facial enhancement is along two broad principles. Firstly, the end result should look natural

and secondly, the treatment plan should be tailor made to suite the individual. This point is extremely vital as medical aesthetic clinicians are consulting patients from a wide array of backgrounds and ethnic origins each with their own likes and dislikes.

People today view themselves as individuals with such positive attitudes about their ongoing mental and physical wellbeing that they have removed the outmoded ethic of guilt about improving their personal appearance. Coupled with the numerous studies that have shown the benefits of ‘looking good’ to enhancing one’s psychological and emotional wellbeing that ultimately leads to further enhancing relationships, confidence, and even one’s health. Self rejuvenation has become a huge industry simply because of the power of beauty to modify perception and behavior.

Beauty is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as *‘a combination of qualities – including grace of form and charm of colouring that delights the sight or other senses’*

Beauty has been recognized but is difficult to define across cultures and time. Studies of African tribal masks which portray exaggerations of human expression show the vertical lines in the face such as those between the brows, from the corner of the nose to the corner of the mouth, and those found from the corner of the mouth to the chin; all convey negative emotions such as anger, depression, fatigue, bitterness, disappointment and envy.

Horizontal lines across the brow and radiating from the corners of the eyes

may be masculinizing features. Vertical lip lines are seen as the hallmark of the aged female lower face.

So called ‘lunch time procedures’ such as cosmetic botulinum injections (Botox®) fit neatly into the lives of individuals trying to balance the ongoing responsibilities of family, friends, and jobs, with at least some time to enhance their own personal wellbeing.

Botulinum toxins, once feared as the world’s most ‘poisonous poison’, are now eagerly sought by the adult public as a way to soften negatively perceived lines of facial expression. Botox® has been used since 1987 for cosmetic indications and injecting doctors have an excellent understanding of the dramatic benefit that can be achieved by the use of this modality. Furthermore, the medical aesthetic world at large knows that cosmetic botulinum toxin treatment is safe and effective and importantly, demands no downtime. Injecting physicians are increasingly aware that botulinum toxin treatment is also an adjunct to other non surgical aesthetic therapies such as soft tissue augmentation and laser resurfacing.

We have a number of different cosmetic uses for Botox® today but of critical importance is the emergence of facial shaping in conjunction with wrinkle effacement. Other less well known cosmetic uses of Botox® is lifting and shaping the eyes, lifting the tip of the nose, ‘face lift’ in certain individuals, and even lifting the breasts.

With all of the different injecting techniques to suite varying individual preferences and the emergence of new technologies it has never been truer or easier to undergo aesthetic facial enhancement – after all if you look good you feel good too! ■