

Facial Exercise: The Evidence Does Not Lie



Addicted To Beauty At Any Expense?

It is easy to understand the confusion that occurs when a journalist or medical professional researches "facial exercise". There are literally hundreds of thousands of websites dispensing misinformation that scrunches, twitches, puckers and facial contortions are considered facial exercise. Blur that with non-surgical facelifts disguised as facial massage, devices in the mouth, electro-stimulators, even topical creams and invasive injections, it's no wonder there is mass confusion with no clarity when researching "facial exercise".

The 21st Century dawned with staggering statistics of desperate people using surgery and injections to enhance their appearance. The media has accommodated the drug companies and doctors by providing magazines, television shows and other outlets with an ongoing smorgasbord of invasive and not-so-invasive procedures and prescriptions paraded almost daily in sensationalized headlines and advertising. This deliberate brainwashing has lulled the masses into believing that invasive, risky procedures are the only way to reverse the signs of aging in the face.

...the media has missed the most important discovery of all

Searching for the "Fountain of Youth" has become media fodder and yet the media has missed the most important discovery of all.

Isometric exercise makes elective aesthetic surgery for face lifts unnecessary.

Cutting Healthy Tissue

The business of "cosmetic procedures" has skyrocketed. Since 2000, there has been a substantial surge in elective aesthetic (cosmetic) surgery. In 2005, there were more than 10.2 million total cosmetic procedures performed in the United States. This is an increase of 11% from the previous year and these statistics

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clearly demonstrate that Americans, particularly women, are increasingly willing to invest in cutting healthy tissue to buy into the myth that enhancement means surgery.

Fair and balanced reporting could save money and lives.

In 1994 there were only 364,398 total cosmetic procedures performed; this means that the American economy propelled the aesthetic surgery industry to a gain of 2700% in less than twelve years. The media has sufficiently supported the newest, modern, up-to-date surgical, minimally invasive and cosmetic enhancement processes that taunt consumers into believing that anti-aging is all about spending huge sums of money while risking one's health. Fair and balanced reporting could save money and lives.

The upsurge in cosmetic overhaul demands has left no one out. More minorities are undergoing cosmetic procedures than ever; according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons the number of surgical cosmetic procedures jumped 65% for African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics in 2006.

Dangerous and Temporary

New surgical procedures and injections usually have unknown consequences and even doctors hesitate to jump on the bandwagon quickly. Consider the quote from Dr. Kotler: "I certainly would not be one of the first to serve as a guinea pig for a new surgical procedure. I'm not sure if seven years is the appropriate waiting period, but there should certainly be a wait to see what problems develop over time in those who have the surgery," states clinical instructor Robert Kotler of UCLA medical school, and author of "The Essential Cosmetic Surgery Companion" (2005). "In the world of cosmetic procedures, it takes years before all the benefits, all the complications and dissatisfactions come to awareness" says Kotler.

Even with the new state-of-the-art minimal-incision face lifting techniques, there are still major drawbacks and serious consequences with every surgical procedure. "Even when successful, these procedures are by no means a 'permanent fix' as subsequent face lifts or other interventions usually are required," states Mark Berman, MD, Santa Monica, CA, past President of the California Academy of Cosmetic Surgeons. These subsequent visits for additional surgery, injections, liposuctions, peels and more eventually take a toll on the user's available income and long-term health issues can arise.

IS THERE A VIABLE SOLUTION THAT HAS ZERO RISKS AND NO SIDE EFFECTS?

The general public wants to know there is a proven, safe alternative to plastic surgery.

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Facial muscles that are sagging can be retrained and lifted with resistance movements and the general public deserves to know that there is a proven, safe alternative to plastic surgery that will indeed lift, tone and tighten facial features.

Isometric exercise makes elective aesthetic surgery for face lifts unnecessary.

These carefully orchestrated facial exercises are not contortions. Rather, they are isometric and resistance exercises that address the cause of aging in faces. These specialized exercises shape and contour the face and neck muscles easily and simply without the high costs or risks typically associated with cosmetic or plastic surgery.

Neuromuscular Facial Retraining

The medical community has long used resistance exercise to correct certain orofacial maladies caused by injury or disease. Neuromuscular facial retraining, facial exercise, is the foundation of Orofacial Myology. This regimen has been used for years by physicians and practitioners whose patients have suffered facial paralysis, Bell's Palsy, traumatic injury and more to strengthen the facial musculature through exercise while normalizing the movements of the facial muscles with outstanding results.

Licia Paskay, Los Angeles based Certified Orofacial Myologist, trained to evaluate and treat facial muscle dysfunction, states, "Exercises for the face are very good, they balance the muscles and a balanced face makes a person look better".

According to Berman there are two reconstructive interventions (for facial aging): Surgical and non-surgical. "The non-surgical method is through regular exercise of facial muscles and this can be accomplished effectively without any of the health risks, expense, and pain or scarring of surgery or injections. I've seen the results and it works!"

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Resistance exercise for the face works just like exercise using weights, body weight and strength training for the torso, legs, hips, and arms. Resistance movements for the face require the user to employ thumbs and fingers in strategic positions so that a contraction is caused in the muscles. Artificially anchoring one end of the muscle will produce a plumping effect when oxygenated blood is forced to the tissue. Dr. Berman, "Such physical exercise of the facial muscles can create a more youthful, healthier appearance by causing the facial skin to tighten up and become more toned."

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Facial Exercise Makes Sense Medically

Most doctors agree that if you are out of shape you need exercise to strengthen the core muscles; it is absurd to think that facial muscles wouldn't benefit from highly specialized isometric exercise techniques.

Regarding facial exercise Dr. Berman states, "...this is a medically sound method of achieving and maintaining a more youthful facial appearance with the capacity of obtaining results that are comparable to those that can be achieved by surgical means. It makes sense medically. Like a face lift or fat injection, such physical exercise of the facial muscles can create a more youthful, healthier appearance by causing the facial skin to tighten up and become more toned. And it can accomplish this effectively without any of the health risk, expense, pain or scarring of surgery. Whether you're 30 or 70, you'll see a definite change".

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Most medical practitioners have not been trained in isometric facial exercise, nor have they had the opportunity to observe and witness the amazing results of resistance and contraction exercises. Because of this, they do not recommend these simple, non-surgical, non-invasive movements to their clients.

Wild West Cowboys

Non-surgical cosmetic grade procedures are typically not covered by insurance companies. Offering the latest muscle paralyzing injection or those that fill and plump lines and wrinkles provides the doctor a revenue stream that doesn't require insurance filing or collecting hassles because the fees are paid in advance by those seeking treatment.

A strong stance against unethical, untrained "wild west cowboys" needs to be implemented by every state since medical doctors have begun to augment their incomes with injections and surgical procedures fueled by the increased demand for beauty and youthfulness. They are thinking more like entrepreneurs and less like benevolent healers.

Dr. Berry Lycka author of "Restoring Youth – How to Keep and Restore Natural Beauty" founded the Ethical Cosmetic Surgery Association to alert the public about the fact that tax cuts proposed by President Bush will drastically affect physicians. "Many physicians who previously offered services to Medicare patients will simply no longer be able to do so." Dr. Lycka goes on to say, "To provide income, many of these doctors will probably find their way into doing some sort of cosmetic surgery procedure. With Botox, lasers, and fillers perceived as easy to do, many doctors

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will migrate to these practices. To cosmetic patients it will be a case of 'let the buyer beware'. Many doctors are not adequately trained to provide these procedures."

Some plastic surgeons have created vehicles designed to educate the public while policing their colleagues' practices. John J. Corey MD, Executive Director of the Association for Plastic Surgery Awareness, APSA, says this website (www.APSA.org), was created to raise mainstream consumer's awareness and provide them the information, tools and resources for potential patients to research the background of a plastic surgeon before undergoing any surgical procedure.

The risks are more than just monetary.

The elation of expectation, the fevered pitch of anticipation and the desire to rid oneself of aging facial features has prompted desperate people to act irresponsibly. Many go into debt, fly off to exotic islands and accept substandard surgery practices because they want to look younger. Health risks be damned! Hospital and clinic environments, no matter what country or hemisphere, increase one's risk of infection and MRSA, the nasty staph infection that can lead to death after surgery.

Before anyone considers a face lift or a cosmetic surgical procedure there is helpful information that one must consider:

- Each surgery involves 1 – 3 hours of actual procedure time.
- During pre-op the surgeon will use a marker to indicate the location and length of the planned incision lines. The patient is then given injections of Lidocaine and Epinephrine for pain and to prevent excessive bleeding.
- Choice of anesthesia: oral or intravenous sedatives will be administered. Even if oral sedation is chosen, an IV will be started to maintain the body's hydration level.
- Surgical procedure will likely include removing the tissue beneath the skin while either cutting or manipulating the muscle to create the desired look. The surgery may also include separating the skin and muscle from the skull to remove excess skin and fat. Muscles and skin are then sutured or stapled.
- During the recovery period the patient is moved to a recovery room to have vital statistics monitored for approximately two hours. Patients may experience sensations ranging from discomfort, disorientation, nausea, and change in body temperature which may cause shivering and sweating. Patients then may be given additional pain relievers and anti-nausea medication.
- Cost when combined with fees such as anesthesia can range from \$3,000 - \$35,000.
- Scarring and loss of sensation: no matter how nicely hidden away the scars

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- are, cutting creates a loss of sensation.
- Weeks of bruising and swelling, infection, uneven suturing, and hematomas are some of the most frequent complaints and consequences registered with surgery.

Prevent Your Death

The most serious complication of cosmetic surgery is death. There have been deaths associated with cosmetic plastic surgery but the statistics are difficult to access because mandatory reporting of botched cosmetic procedures does not exist. This means that the actual number of deaths attributed to bungled operations is unknown and unreported because they sometimes occur weeks and months after the surgery.

Untrained Practitioners

Medispas, situated in malls and other high traffic areas, offer an array of medical grade cosmetic treatments such as chemical peels, injections of Botox, electro-stimulation and laser procedures. Most times these procedures are performed under the direction of a doctor, not necessarily a plastic surgeon or dermatologist, either by an aesthetician or registered nurse.

Be aware that any MD, gynecologist or even a dentist, can perform plastic surgery without extensive training or certification. It is a little known fact that hundreds of plastic surgery procedures are conducted each day in the U.S. by doctors whose medical background, experience or training is not board certified plastic surgery. Even more amazing is that this practice is not illegal in most states. It is increasingly difficult to separate the qualified surgeon from the unqualified quack.

The medical boards for many states do not have specific regulations for medical spas or their treatment menus so consumers beware!

The best kept anti-aging secret revealed - how facial exercise works.

Specialized facial exercise techniques using only the thumbs and fingers can reshape and contour sagging, out of shape faces, transforming the features into a dramatically younger looking face. Without surgery, without drugs, without risk, without high costs, without scarring, without recovery time, without pain, without mutilation and repeat procedures, resistance training will provide a substantial benefit to sagging facial muscles.

Facial muscles can elongate up to 1/2 inch by age 55

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Gravity assures the lengthening of facial tissue - this includes muscles and skin. In the face skin attaches directly to the muscles. Over time the muscles and the skin begin to lose their tone and elasticity; this is when the face begins the look of age. Studies show that facial muscles can elongate up to 1/2 inch by age 55 and when this happens, the skin is dragged downward creating lines, creases and folds.

All muscles require exercise to maintain their form and shape. The facial muscles are no different - they also require exercise that goes beyond stimulation like massage or electric current or daily facial movements such as smiling, grimacing or singing. The facial muscles, like the body muscles, respond to exercise that uses both resistance and contraction. This action keeps facial muscles youthfully positioned because when muscles are stronger, sagging is minimized and the skin is tighter and toned.

Many facial muscles connect to bone only at one end; the other end attaches to skin or another muscle. This unique configuration of the muscles means that in order to sufficiently exercise a muscle so that it plumps up and lifts, an artificial anchor must be employed. This is accomplished by using the thumbs and fingers.

Sometimes those thumbs are inside the mouth while the fingers are lightly touching the face. It is recommended that the user wear light weight white cotton gloves while holding and anchoring facial muscles. These small muscles weave over and under each before attaching to skin or another muscle and that is why retraining facial muscles require that the user learn to isolate, anchor, then actively contract the muscle or muscle groups.

The many facial muscles and muscle groups under the skin respond well to isometric contraction. These contractions with resistance remarkably increase muscle tone and that plumping of the muscles results in a brighter face energized with increased oxygen; this is especially important for those middle aged and above who experience dull, lifeless skin due to a lack of oxygen to the outer tissues as a direct result of aging.

As the muscles respond to exercise, the face is enhanced as skin acts younger and muscles lift. The facial exerciser looks years younger as a result of increased muscle mass and thicker skin. Just as exercise works for the body, facial exercise works for the face and neck.

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