



SPECIAL FEATURE COSMETIC REJUVENATION

STORY BY **KC MAGAZINE STAFF**

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, 12.1 million Americans underwent a cosmetic procedure in 2008 (the most recent year for which data is available). A 3 percent increase over 2007, this was a significant gain in a year when the economy was anything but stable. Of these more than 12 million procedures, minimally invasive, cosmetic touch-ups were most popular; these included laser skin resurfacing and treatment of leg veins, Botox, and hyaluronic and polylactic acid fillers.

We know what you're thinking: "Poly acid what?!" Don't worry, it's all a lot easier to understand—and experience—than you might think, thanks to the experts at Kansas City's cosmetic and plastic surgery centers.

"One of the biggest misconceptions about non-invasive facial rejuvenation is that there is no difference between Botox and facial fillers," says Dr. Keith Hodge, one of six board-certified plastic surgeons at Monarch Plastic Surgery Center. "Botox acts by relaxing

muscles that cause wrinkles, whereas fillers actually replace the volume loss seen with aging." At Monarch, filler options include the hyaluronic acid product Juvederm and the new polylactic acid product Sculptra.

Yes, there are those words again. Let us break it down for you: Hyaluronic acids occur naturally in the body; their purpose in life is to enhance tissue hydration. So Juvederm injections, which have been approved by the Federal Drug Administration to last up to one year, help promote and stimulate natural collagen production that fills out wrinkles and reverses the fat loss that can contribute to an aged, tired or deflated visage. Sculptra is a similar "biostimulatory filler," Hodge says. "It is an exciting new product that creates a gradual revolumization of the face by inducing new collagen production without the need for surgery."

This gradual process is key in ensuring cosmetic procedures appear natural rather than overdone and achieve every patient's ultimate

RESOURCE GUIDE: *American Society of Plastic Surgeons*, plasticsurgery.org. *Hynes Plastic Surgery Center*, 930 Carondelet Drive, Kansas City, 816-942-5900, hynescosmeticsurgery.com. *Monarch Plastic Surgery Center*, 4801 W. 135th St., Leawood, 913-663-3838; 9401 N. Oak Trafficway, Ste. 100, Kansas City, 816-436-3262.

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goal: a natural, youthful look. And we mean *every* patient. While the 2008 statistics compiled by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons indicate 91 percent of all cosmetic procedures in the United States are performed on females, Hodge says male patients are common at Monarch as well. “Men are consistently increasing their awareness of good skin care products and procedures,” Hodge says. “We see men for facial rejuvenation, and face-lifts, brow lifts and eye lifts are becoming more popular for our male clientele.”

No matter than client, Hodge says that the “minimal access cranial suspension,” or MACS facelift, is one of the most sought-after, minimally invasive procedures he and colleagues at Monarch provide. “It uses a short scar while providing a superior rejuvenation of the neck,” he says. “This technique also has the advantage of not altering the hairline, allowing women to wear their hair up with no visible scar.” Brow lifts are equally non-invasive these days, thanks to endoscopic advances that employ several small incisions rather than one, continuous, long one.

Dr. Michael F. Hynes of Hynes Plastic Surgery Center says the best practice for any patient is to employ a skin care and rejuvenation regimen that addresses issues over time: a series of peels to help retexture the skin, injectable fillers or even laser treatments. The more drastic, surgical procedures and comprehensive treatments Hynes offers, including cutting-edge laser liposuction technologies, may be needed down the road, but he says that “by taking smaller measures earlier on, you can stave off a full facelift [or other procedure] for years.”

Hodge and his colleagues agree, which is why Monarch is dedicated to helping its patients develop healthy skin through healthy habits: “Preventative measures include sun avoidance and a healthy lifestyle,” Hodge says. “[And at our] Monarch Skin Rejuvenation Center, we offer laser and light therapies to tighten the skin, enhance collagen production and decrease the signs of aging. When this is combined with our prescription-strength skin care products, our patients realize the maximum benefit.”

Hodge says that, since the best cosmetic surgery candidate is an informed candidate, the best time to try it depends on the patient. Nevertheless, the demographics often break down like this:

IN YOUR 20s: Common procedures for women are breast augmentation, liposuction and preventative skin care.

IN YOUR 30s & 40s: This is the era of the “mommy makeover,” which includes tummy tucks and breast rejuvenation. “Most women also find skin care to be a priority at this age,” Hodge says. “It is also a time for eyelid rejuvenation and other procedures that maintain youth and beauty without a drastic change in appearance.

IN YOUR 50s & 60s: Women in this age group are often interested in a face- and neck-lift to maintain a healthy, rested look.

The costs associated with the various procedures available range from a few hundred dollars to several thousand, which is another reason that full consultation with an expert surgeon is essential, so that patients achieve their desired look at the right time, for the right price—and with the perfect end result. ■



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