



## **Lowe Plastic Surgery (LPS)**

Dr. Lowe's Facts about Limited Facelifts or Mini-Facelifts  
(*Excerpts from Dr. Lowe's Mentor Dr. Fritz Barton*)

### **How long will it last?**

The vast majority of facelifts are skin lifts. That is – using the same incisions that are common to all techniques. The skin is timidly elevated in front of the ear, and the cheek mass is pulled upward using the skin as a handle.

This very limited technique is popular because it's simple and recovery is very fast. **There is only one problem.** Skin is like taffy. It stretches when pulled and you lose half of your fabulous result in as early as six months. That is where the concept of facelifts “falling down” came from. So what do you do? You go back to your surgeon in a year or two and have a “little tuck” or a “mini lifts.” Redoing facelift procedures placed on the skin only too often can give your face an over stretched look.

### **There is a better way.**

Under the skin of the face there are deep supporting structures called fascia. Their job is to hold things in place so your face retains its general shape. By definition, these layers do not stretch like taffy or they couldn't do their job. The deep supporting structure of the face is called the “SMAS”. If the deep supporting structure is used as the handle to lift the cheek, two good things happen. First, the lift is much more solid and long lasting. The skin is not pulled under unnatural tension so you don't look stretched. That's the good news. The bad news is that it is a more extensive procedure take longer, cost more money, and result in a longer recovery with greater swelling.

With a standard deep plane or “SMAS” facelift instead of looking better than you started out at two weeks, it will take four to six weeks. You'll feel OK at the end of two weeks, and you won't scare anyone, but you won't fool anyone for four to six weeks post-op. Unfortunately, a facelift is like everything else in life. If you want more, you have to put more into it – meaning, you have to be patient with the postoperative period. Dr. Lowe's usual advice for looking your best longer is to do a facelift **LESS OFTEN** and **MORE THOROUGHLY**.

### **Is there a way to compromise?**

Life is always about compromise in the right clinical situation. In patients with significant past health histories or who are significantly older, surgical compromise can be the best option. In these cases the deep layers of the face and neck are tightened (i.e. plicated) but not completely undermined or released. This does not provide the best clinical result in some cases, but the surgery can be performed with less time, cost, and recovery. The results of a limited or “mini facelift” should not be compared to the standard procedures. They will not be as long lasting or natural, but can often provide older patients or those with significant medical conditions an acceptable cosmetic result or compromise.

### **How do I keep from looking “operated” on?**

To get through your operation safely is medical science; the way you look is pure art. Facelifts by different surgeons are very different. It's not like shopping for a fancy car because a car is the same product at each dealership. The difference with a car is merely price and service.

Not so with art. In any museum with fine paintings, the only elements the paintings have in common are canvass and paint. After all, they are different based on the style and skill of the artist. The same is true of facelifts regardless of the technique. Every surgeon's artistic approach is different and each patient is a new canvass. The artistic goal is not to remove every line from a face. Many lines are caused by animation muscles, and to remove all the lines would mean releasing the attachments of all the muscles of expression. While a perfectly smooth face might look good in still photography, it looks like a mask in real life without passion or personality.

Dr. Lowe's goal is to make each patient look good without looking like a different person. He believes that each patients treatment should be individualized based on their concerns, priorities, and expectations. Facial rejuvenation is usually a process involving a commitment lifestyle changes, skin care, injectables, and in some cases surgery.

### **What should I expect from a Limited Facelift or Mini-facelift?**

Each patient's clinical situation and concerns are different. The patient should talk to Dr. Lowe and his staff about the length of the operation and the recovery. In many cases, patients who undergo these procedures feel comfortable returning to work within several weeks as long as no major complications occur. Patients may combine this procedure with other operations that may lengthen recovery. These more limited procedures may require revision or touch up work depending on the clinical situations every 2-5 years. It is important for patients to address these concerns during the course of the clinical consultation with the Plastic Surgeon.