



Lowe Plastic Surgery (LPS)

Dr. Lowe's Facts about Mid-face and Cheek Surgical Rejuvenation

(Excerpts from Dr. Lowe's Mentor Dr. Fritz Barton)

Introduction

Complete facial rejuvenation entails returning the entire facial regions to a more youthful state either at one time or through a series of nonsurgical and surgical steps. Facial rejuvenations can involve lifestyle modifications, weight loss, skin care regimens, laser treatments, injectables, and a number of surgical procedures. Dr. Lowe usually provides individualized recommendations in these areas during the course of a facial cosmetic consultation. This document focuses on the two most common facial cosmetic surgeries used to address facial aging. Facial harmony or balance is often best achieved by combining these surgical procedures.

Mid-Face Lift

How long will the mid-face lift it last?

The vast majority of mid-face lifts are skin lifts. That is – using the same incisions that are common to all techniques. The skin is timidly elevated from below eyelid, and the cheek mass is pulled upward using the skin as a handle. This 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 3 months. That is where the concept of cheek lift “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 lift.” Redoing mid-face procedures too often can give your face an over stretched look or cause your eyelid to pull down or look “sad.”

There is a better way.

Under the skin of the mid-face or cheek there are deep supporting structures called fascia and muscle. Their job is to hold things in place so your cheek and lower eyelid retains its general shape. By definition, these layers do not stretch like taffy or they couldn't do their job. 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 so you swell longer. 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 mid-face lift 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 advice for looking your best longer is to do a mid-face or cheek lift **LESS OFTEN** and **MORE THOROUGHLY**.

Eyelid Surgery (Blepharoplasty)

Will my eyes look younger?

Patients undergoing cheek lift procedures usually require at list a lower eyelid tuck. It is through the lower eyelid incision that the mid-face or cheek is most commonly lifted. The vast majority of eyelid tucks are simple skin removals procedures. That is – using

the same incisions that are common to all techniques. The skin is timidly removed or treated with a laser above and below the eyelid margin, and a small amount of skin is removed without addressing deeper structures. This limited technique is popular because it's simple and recovery is very fast. **There is only one problem.** Skin is like taffy and it stretches when pulled and you may not see significant improvement of the deep circles or grooves around the eyes. So what do you do? You can undergo multiple treatments with injectables to try to improve irregularities.

There is a better way.

Under the skin there are supporting structures that support the fat and muscles around the eyelids. These structures hold things in place, but become displaced and loose with time. Unfortunately, these structures often contribute to the bagginess around the upper and lower eyelids. In order to improve these bags around the eyelid, structures must be cut and reposition to address the grooving. The bad news is that this is a more extensive procedure so you swell longer and have more bruising. 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, but you won't fool anyone for four to six weeks post-op.

Unfortunately, advanced eyelid surgery and cheek lifts are like everything else in life. If you want more, you have to put more into it – meaning, you have to be patient in the postoperative period. Sometimes these procedures will require a tightening of the lower eyelid to avoid pulling down with healing. All patients will be required to perform an aggressive regimen of eyelid massage and eye-drops.

Are there other options?

Surgery like life sometimes requires compromise. Botox or other paralyzing agents can provide a medical or nonsurgical facial rejuvenation. This works by temporarily paralyzing forehead muscles that pull down and relaxing muscles that pull up. These procedures have reduced some surgical procedures. As patients age these agents improve the perioral, forehead, eyelid wrinkles at the expense of facial expression. The wrinkles improve but some areas droop and loose tone.

Upper eyelid tucks or blepharoplasties allow patients to continue non-surgical treatments longer but not indefinitely. Removing upper eyelid skin allows the brow to relax and compensate thereby improving forehead wrinkles. Upper eyelid tucks are often combined with brow tightening (browpexy) through the same incisions. Securing the brow directly along the orbital rim stabilizes brow decent and avoids additional scars. This is often the best option for patients with thinning hair or a receding hairline. Lower eyelid surgery is used to improve the lower lid bad or to lift the cheek. In most patients the need for surgery is obvious, but in others it can be a difficult clinical and cosmetic decision. Patients should carefully weigh the pros and cons of facial rejuvenation with a skilled board certified plastic surgeon such as Dr. James Lowe.

Facial Cosmetic Surgery as an Art

How do avoid looking “operated” on?

Getting through your operation safely relies on medical science; the way you look is pure art. Facial cosmetic surgery performed by different surgeons can be 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 facial rejuvenation with mid-face lifts, eyelid tucks, or other cosmetic surgery. 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, cheek, or eyelids, but to rejuvenate the region in a natural way. Many lines are caused by facial muscles, and to remove all the lines would result in loss of facial expression. While a perfectly smooth face and eyelids might look good in still photography, it looks like a mask in real life without passion or personality.

Facial cosmetic surgery is not for everyone. Just because a patient is older does not mean they will look better after surgery. At least once or twice a week in America examples of bad cosmetic surgery can be seen at the mall, church, internet, or on TV. Although beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder – bad cosmetic surgery is usually obvious. In some cities, the bad cosmetic surgery is so prominent patients are afraid. The wrong procedure performed by the wrong surgeon on the wrong patient for the wrong reason, results in the wrong look. These are the patients who can look “weird.”

Nothing is as frightening and obvious as bad facial cosmetic surgery. Many of these people actually believe or convinced themselves that they look good. Some will even rave about the cosmetic surgeon who performed the procedure. Simple and quick is good in fast food, but is rarely better in facial cosmetic surgery. Sadly, good plastic surgery is often what patients fear the most. After a full recovery, good facial rejuvenation should be subtle. Patients with great facial plastic surgery simply look really great for their age. These patients rarely admit to the surgery; and why should they?

Dr. Lowe's goal is to make patients look good, without looking like a different person. His approach is individualized based on the patient's unique features, concerns, and expectations. Combining cosmetic procedures increases the length of surgery, but it saves money and decreases total recovery time for most patients.

Conclusions

Surgical rejuvenation of the mid-face, cheeks, and eyes can be performed together or separately. These surgical procedures can be combined with liposuction, fat injection, resurfacing, nose jobs, etc. The rate limiting factor is usually time and complexity. Some patients prefer to take their time while others want to do as much as possible. Dr. Lowe helps patients decide how and when to do surgery in the safest and most effective way. Facial harmony and balance can almost always be achieved at affordable price with a predictable recovery. Good surgical rejuvenation can often be the right thing for the right person. For further information check out our website or other helpful links at www.drjlowe.com