

FACIAL PLASTIC SURGERY

TODAY

A newsletter for the patients of Lawrence Martin, MD, FACS

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Let's make a deal ... how to know when a discount is a really good idea

You have probably seen commercials advertising discounts on certain cosmetic procedures or treatments. Maybe you have received coupons through the mail or e-mail. There are also social media sites such as Facebook, or deal-of-the-day sites such as Groupon that entice you to take advantage of a limited-time offer. Even some product manufacturers have advertised rebates to consumers. So, how do you know when it makes sense to take advantage of a deal?

Discount the discount

Don't purchase a treatment just because of the perceived amount of money you will save. If a treatment normally costs \$300 and you have the chance to try it for \$150, your first reaction might be—wow, I am going to save \$150, this is a great deal! However, you are still spending \$150 that you might not have otherwise if you hadn't seen the deal. Only consider a deal if the treatment is one that you have already been thinking about seriously. The discount is just an added benefit that allows you to get it done at a lower cost.

Do your homework

The most important factor to consider is your safety. Research the offer thoroughly; read the fine print. Are there any restrictions or limitations? Who will be performing the procedure? Where will it be performed? Call the physician's office before you purchase to get these questions answered. If you have questions for the facial plastic surgeon, ask for a



consultation appointment to discuss the treatment before actually scheduling it. This will allow you the opportunity to ask questions and allay any uncertainties.

Typical offers

Most facial plastic surgeons like to offer a skin treatment or minimally invasive procedure at a discount as an outreach to clients who need an extra incentive to come into the practice. Alternatively, the surgeon may specialize in a certain technique and want to draw attention to a wider audience by offering a discount.

Decision

Most deals are for a limited time, but don't feel pressured into purchasing it if you are unsure or not ready. Is this treatment something you will benefit from? Do you feel comfortable with the

facial plastic surgeon and where the treatment will be performed? Will you be evaluated by the doctor before the treatment? What if you change your mind? Be sure you thoroughly explore what is entailed. Get on the phone and speak to the physician's office about the details of the deal. For more serious treatments, be sure to meet with the doctor beforehand so that you feel completely at ease. Just because you are paying less does not mean that you shouldn't expect high quality treatment, service, and results. While cost is a factor, it shouldn't be the only determining aspect. Safety and quality should be your main points of concern. ■

Teens seeking facial plastic surgery ... is it right for my child?

Some teenagers have more than going back to school on their minds this fall—they are planning cosmetic treatments and surgeries in increasing numbers. What should you do if your teen is asking for surgery? How do you know if they are ready?

Popular procedures

Congenital defects, acne scarring, asymmetry, or imbalance can create distress unnecessarily if it can be corrected with treatment or surgery. Rhinoplasty, acne/scar treatment, and otoplasty are common procedures for teens.

Rhinoplasty is surgery of the nose and may be performed for cosmetic or functional reasons. Rhinoplasty can correct defects or asymmetries—improve breathing, minimize a hump, straighten, shorten, reduce, or narrow. A young patient must reach full growth, usually around age 15 or 16, before the nose is altered. In cases where breathing is severely impaired, there may be exceptions.

Teens with acne may benefit from microdermabrasion, where the upper layer of the skin is removed. It improves skin irregularities as a new, smoother layer emerges. Chemical peels can unblock the pores, open blackheads and whiteheads, and stimulate new skin growth. Additional options may include topical creams, blue light therapy, or fractionated resurfacing. For teens with acne scars, your facial plastic surgeon may recommend laser treatment or collagen injections to smooth skin scarring.

Otoplasty can reshape, reduce, or make the ears more symmetrical. The surgeon will evaluate the ears based on proportion and harmony with the total facial features, in addition to taking measurements. The procedure can be done on



children as young as five or six years old, when the ear is 90 percent of adult size and the cartilage is extremely pliable. Your teen may still benefit from the procedure.

Questions to ask your teenager

Why do you want to change your appearance?
Discuss with your teen why she may feel insecure. Are the concerns well founded? Your teen should be able to express what she doesn't like about the facial feature and how she would like it changed. A good candidate for surgery understands the benefits of surgery and also the limitations—i.e., you won't come out of the operating room looking like Angelina Jolie or Taylor Swift.

What features do you want to correct?

Your facial plastic surgeon will not recommend an invasive procedure just so the teenager may look prettier. Also, surgeries that produce subtle results with minimal benefits are not recommended. Rhinoplasty, including cosmetic and reconstructive (e.g., correcting a nasal obstruction or cleft palate reconstruction),

is the most popular procedure performed on teenagers.

What are your expectations for the results?

Be realistic. Your teenager shouldn't believe that improving her appearance will turn her life into a fairytale. While surgery can bring about positive changes in self-esteem, it is not a cure-all for this vulnerable time period. Additionally, patience is required; it takes time to heal from surgery and for the final results to be seen.

Questions to ask your facial plastic surgeon

What are my teenager's options?

Although your teenager may have a specific procedure in mind, make sure you ask the facial plastic surgeon to provide you with all of the possible treatment options—from minimally invasive to invasive. This is important, particularly if you are not sure your son or daughter is ready for surgery. Your facial plastic surgeon may also recommend attending a seminar or informational session before considering a treatment.

Will you be explaining the details of the procedure to both my teenager and myself?

Absolutely, you should expect that the facial plastic surgeon thoroughly explain to you and your teen what will and won't happen before, during, and after the procedure. Your surgeon will not perform the surgery if he or she doesn't believe that your teenager is initiating the whole process, i.e., you cannot be the one suggesting or pushing for the surgery. The surgeon will also ensure that your teen fully understands each step of the process, is mature enough to follow the pre- and post-operative instructions, and is psychologically stable. ■

In the mother's own words...



A few years ago, my son mentioned that he was not happy with a particular feature on his face. I reassured him that he looked handsome and that no one was blessed with a perfect face. Fast forward a few months, he brought it up at his annual physical exam with his physician. The doctor told him that he was still growing and that he should just wait and see how his features developed over time. Occasionally, my son complained about this "flaw" that he wished he could fix. He was never teased about it, but felt very self-conscious. I didn't really think much about it until he was about to turn 15. Then it dawned on me that if he was really bothered by this imperfection, it wouldn't hurt to get an expert opinion and find out the options. I approached him and asked if he would be interested in getting his face evaluated by an expert and he couldn't say yes fast enough. We actually went to two different experts—both gave the same advice on what improvements could be made—and we ultimately decided based on how comfortable we felt with the one particular doctor. Even before the procedure, I noticed immediately that my son felt this new sense of empowerment that he was making a change that was going to positively affect his life. And after the healing? My son is so much more confident and happy. While I am not sure that he would have been ready physically or emotionally to have the surgery at a younger age, we are definitely glad that we didn't let this go on into adulthood.

ASK THE SURGEON



How effective is using your own cells to eliminate wrinkles?

Wrinkles cannot be "eliminated" completely by any method; however, there are many ways to improve them. Autologous cell therapy, i.e., using your own cells, has no risk of your body having an allergic reaction to the substance. The results may only last up to six months, however, because the cells eventually get reabsorbed into your body. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently approved autologous cell therapy in the form of an injectable wrinkle treatment. The manufacturer, Fibrocell Science, states that the product, LaViv (azficel-T), is a personalized aesthetic cell therapy for improving the appearance of moderate-to-severe nasolabial folds in adults. Although it may offer some benefit, it has not been widely used and lacks long-term study. The FDA has also required further surveillance to ascertain its safety and efficacy. Talk to your facial plastic surgeon about your concerns and what treatment option may offer you optimal results. ■

HEALTH TIP



Make sure you prepare yourself for the emotional and psychological effects of having facial plastic surgery. It is common during the recovery period to feel tired, bloated, sore, sad, irritable, bored, and anxious. These feelings are to be expected and usually improve as your body heals. The following tips will help you minimize any negative psychological impacts.

- Set realistic goals for the recovery and results.
- Follow the post-operative guidelines from your facial plastic surgeon.
- Nourish your body with plenty of water and healthy food.
- Establish a strong support system for your recuperation and accept their help (meals, cleaning, trash pickup).
- Ensure your recovery space is setup with snacks, water, telephone, computer, television, and bathroom.
- Avoid judging your results too quickly; healing and final results take time.

If these uneasy feelings continue to worsen after you have begun to more fully recover, speak with your facial plastic surgeon about a referral to a therapist. ■

WHAT'S NEW?



For the first time, researchers at Iowa State University were able to produce human-like collagen in maize seeds. Most collagen is animal-derived (bovine) and requires allergy testing before administering. Producing collagen from plants could be safe, less expensive, and have a wide range of applications. More studies will have to be done; this will be an interesting development to watch. ■

Facial plastic surgeons give back around the globe

Facial plastic surgeons donate their time and expertise to give back to the worldwide community. Founded in 1992, the FACE TO FACE International Program is a humanitarian and educational surgical exchange program conducted under the sponsorship of the Educational and Research Foundation for the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS). Facial plastic surgeons travel all over the world to help individuals in need, whose faces have been damaged at birth, by disease, or by war. Additionally, surgeons share their knowledge and the latest techniques in facial plastic surgery with their international colleagues. To date, it is estimated that FACE TO FACE volunteers have helped over 1,000 people across the globe. Recent missions have included Colombia, China, Vietnam, Croatia, Russia, and this past summer, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



A team of doctors traveled to Cambodia to work at the Khmer-Soviet Friendship Hospital. This was the fourth mission at this hospital. Quality medical care is very limited in a country like Cambodia. Although the physician census has been slowly increasing, the population demand far exceeds available resources. Volunteer missions have become an important catalyst in the reestablishment of the country's medical infrastructure through education, mentoring, and direct patient care.

June 25 - July 6, 2011, the team screened about 100 patients. Some patients traveled great distances and patiently waited many hours even for an evaluation. The surgeons performed 40 operations—including microtia reconstruction (to correct a malformed, underdeveloped outer ear), nasal reconstruction, facial paralysis reanimation, tumor resection and reconstruction, and scar revisions—over four days, in two operating rooms. Local residents and medical students assisted in the operating room and on the medical wards. The mission was successful not only in completing complex reconstructions, but also in training the local physicians. A mutual respect grows between the FACE TO FACE team and the local medical personnel, as different surgical approaches are discussed and demonstrated. The volunteers exchange case analysis and share

published information. It is this exchange of information, knowledge, and techniques that is encouraged and contributes to the long-term success of the program.

The mission of FACE TO FACE is to treat one face at a time, one person at a time. The international program has touched many lives. And, while the patients still have enormous hurdles to overcome, at least they are given a chance to deal with them without physical limitations.

The AAFPRS has additional FACE TO FACE outreaches, such as Faces of Honor, which provides pro bono medical and surgical expertise to veterans who received face or neck injuries. Also, the National Domestic Violence Project helps victims of domestic abuse who cannot afford to receive treatment for facial injuries. For more information, go to www.aafprs.org, and click on Humanitarian Programs. ■

Future FACE TO FACE Trips

October 2011: Veracruz, Mexico; Vietnam; and Santa Marta, Colombia; March 2012: Hanoi, Vietnam; TBD 2012: Honduras and Moldova

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