

A E D I T

A E S T H E T I C E D I T

The Procedures Experts Want You To Reconsider This Year

Read this before your next appointment.



What's Trending – and Why?

We don't need to tell you that the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically changed the way we lived, worked, and socialized in 2020 and 2021. More time at home and more time dissecting our faces on Zoom, led many who had been contemplating surgery to finally opt to go under the knife. After all, you could recover discreetly without missing a beat. And, if you did venture out, there was plenty that could be concealed behind a face covering.

But, as we increasingly return to in-person living, working, and gathering, the pendulum is swinging back the other way. "My patients are most interested in the non-invasive procedures – what they can do that is a quick treatment, with little downtime, that still delivers results," says Bruce Katz, MD, board certified dermatologist and founder of JUVA Skin and Laser Center in New York City. The same is true on the West Coast. "I'm also seeing fewer patients interested in facelifts and eyelid surgeries," says Neda Mehr, MD, a board certified dermatologist and founder of Pure Dermatology Cosmetic and Hair Center in Newport Beach, CA. "Instead, they're opting for minimal-downtime procedures that can achieve desirable results without the risks of surgery."

But it's not just surgical versus non-surgical. Even among minimally invasive procedures, there are other factors at play. Chief among them? Pain. "Some of the older non-invasive treatments, like Ultherapy®, are declining in popularity," says Stafford Broumand, MD, a board certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon and founder of 740 Park Plastic Surgery in NYC. "We have treatments that render better outcomes with less pain available now." Dr. Mehr agrees. "I have seen a huge shift in my practice away from painful procedures like Ultherapy® to the less invasive procedures like Thermage®," she notes.

Popular Procedure Swaps

Now that we've covered what's driving patients and providers alike to opt for some of these newer, non-surgical and less invasive alternatives, it's time to talk about exactly what some of these updated treatment protocols involve. Here are five our experts are most excited about:

1. NEW USES FOR NEUROMODULATORS

While it's important to talk about neurotoxin safety and how necessary it is to visit a highly skilled provider, interest in the wrinkle-reducing injectables is higher than ever. "We are seeing more filler and Botox® in our practice, as patients are interested in non-invasive quick fixes to correct their facial asymmetry," Dr. Mehr shares. For some, this may be the first time they are seeking treatment. "Since they see themselves on Zoom all day long, [they] are noticing a lot of discrepancies that may not have bothered them before," she adds.

One such area is the nose. Dr. Mehr performs what she calls a "non-surgical nose lift" using strategic placement of neuromodulators. "We use Botox® on the nasal ala (nostrils), the upper sides of the nasal wall, the nasal dorsum area (between the eyes), and the columella (base of the nose) to relax the muscle so it lifts the tip of the nose," she explains. This can act as a minimally invasive alternative to rejuvenation rhinoplasty.

And that's not all. Dr. Mehr and her team are also using botulinum toxin type A injections to treat patients with androgenetic alopecia or genetic forms of hair loss. "For patients with androgenetic alopecia, histopathology specimens show that the blood vessels are in the deeper muscular plane," she explains. "When you soften or relax those muscles with [neuromodulators], the diameter of the blood vessels increases." Treatment requires 150 units, and, for that reason, Dr. Mehr says she usually chooses Dysport®, Jeuveau®, or Xeomin® (rather than Botox®). "When you use beyond 100 units of Botox®, people can start to develop antibodies to it, and it becomes less effective over time," she notes. "The science is the same: If it's a neurotoxin, it relaxes muscles."

When it comes to results, she says patients will start to notice an increase in the diameter of the hair follicles after about three months. By six months, there is increased hair growth. "The treatment frequency is every six months," Dr. Mehr shares. "And ideal candidates are those with temporal thinning and vertex scalp thinning."

2. FACIAL REJUVENATION – SANS SURGERY

At the end of the day, nothing can fully compare to the lifting powers of a surgical facelift – but combining the forces of new skin tightening treatments with biostimulatory injectables can have a seriously rejuvenating effect. For starters, our experts all extoll the virtues of radiofrequency (RF) for firming the skin. Dr. Broumand likes Morpheus8 because it marries the benefits of RF with microneedling, while Dr. Mehr is a fan of Thermage®. “[It] addresses visible signs of aging in just minutes and can be used on the face or body,” she explains. “There is little to no downtime, so my patients can return to their regular activities almost immediately.”

These energy-based skin tightening procedures can be used alone or coupled up as part of a larger, multimodal treatment plan. “Instead of complete facelifts, patients are opting for filler to define certain areas, like the jawline,” Dr. Mehr says. “Over time, as collagen depletes, the face begins to look more ‘boney,’ and placing filler in these areas can help patients achieve a younger-looking appearance.” She often uses Radiesse® because the calcium hydroxylapatite (CAHA)-based injectable stimulates collagen production.

3. LUNCHTIME LASERS

Lasers are pretty multifunctional in terms of the aesthetic concerns they can treat, and there are classes of them that won’t require you to hide out for an extended period of time. If you’re looking to treat facial redness (including rosacea), Dr. Mehr recommends the Excel® V laser. For pigmentation and pore size, consider Clear + Brilliant®. “Each of these has little to no downtime, so patients are able to get back to their Zoom meetings the next morning looking more refreshed,” she says.