

Thanks for the Kind Words...

This was a positive experience. Dr. Desman answered all my questions, informed me of possible less than desirable outcomes, and did not try to convince me to have any other procedures done. The result [of surgery] was more than I could hope for. It accomplished what I wanted and looks completely natural.

—Susan Amato

A Bit of Laughter... Lines from Resumes (that we hope aren't true)

- My ability to complete projects on time is unspeakable.
- Here are my qualifications for you to overlook.
- I am a rabid typist.
- Graduated in top 66 percent of my class.
- Objective: To have my skills and ethics challenged on a daily basis.

I'd Love to Hear from You!

Whether you're thinking of undergoing a medical procedure, or just want to stop by and say "Hi," I'd love to hear from you...

Eric Desman, MD
Virginia Center for Plastic Surgery
6355 Walker Lane, Suite 510
Alexandria, VA 22310-3251
Phone: 703-924-3144
Fax: 703-924-9644
Email: info@vcps.com

www.vcps.com

MEMBER:

American Society of Plastic Surgeons

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Who Wants a 40% Discount on Skin Care Purchase?

Take my Trivia Challenge and you could win!

This is one of my favorite sections. Each month I'll give you a new trivia question. The first two people who call my office with the correct answer will win a 40% discount on any single skin care purchase. Take your best guess, then call me at 703-924-3144.

Here's this month's Mega Trivia Question...

Q. In Greek mythology, which Ethiopian princess was chained to a rock as a sacrifice to a sea monster??

- a) Andromeda b) Iole c) Aida d) Megara

Call me right now with your answer! 703-924-3144

Note: Limited to one gift per winner per year.

Answer to Last Month's Trivia Challenge

The correct answer to what single country supplies the United States with the most oil is d) Canada (for the 7th year in a row in 2005)

Medical Question Corner...

Q: Why is it important to quit smoking before surgery?

A: Smoking interferes with the supply of blood and oxygen to the skin, which inhibits healing. Slower wound healing can mean prolonged use of antibiotics and dressing changes for months instead of weeks and the possibility of developing serious infections. Infection rates are significantly higher in smokers than in non-smokers.

Studies suggest that if smokers cannot quit completely, they should abstain for at least four to six weeks before any type of surgery.

Smokers risk higher complications from anesthesia and an increased chance of developing pneumonia after surgery. If you don't smoke, the chance of complications is normally less than 5%, whereas a smoker's can be as high as 60%.

Be honest with your surgeon about your smoking habits in order to prevent unnecessary complications. Cosmetic surgeries are elective operations and much of their success depends upon good incision healing resulting in less noticeable scars. Don't risk a poor outcome.

If you would like to discuss this further, please call my office at 703-924-3144 to set up an appointment where we can address specific questions and concerns you might have.

Do You Have a Question You Want Answered?

I love hearing from all my good friends and clients who enjoy reading my monthly letter. And I'm always looking to answer pressing questions you might have about anything relating to cosmetic or reconstructive surgery. If you have a question, please feel free to call me at 703-924-3144. Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!



Eric Desman, MD

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Inside This Issue...

<i>Rhytidectomy: A Look at Facelifts</i>	Page 1
<i>Ginger: Good for You</i>	Page 2
<i>Laugh for Better Health</i> ...	Page 2
<i>Know How to Talk to Your Doctor</i>	Page 3
<i>A Bloodless Cholesterol Test</i>	Page 3
<i>Exercise Helps You Think Better and Faster</i>	Page 3
<i>Client of the Month</i>	Page 3
<i>VCPS News</i>	Page 3
<i>Kind Words</i>	Page 4
<i>A Bit of Laughter</i>	Page 4
<i>Take the Trivia Challenge - Win a Special Gift</i>	Page 4
<i>Medical Corner</i>	Page 4

Thought for the Month...

Christmas is perhaps the only time in the year when people can express their true sentiments without feeling self-conscious and, perhaps, foolish. Christmas, in short, is about the only chance a man has to be himself.

Francis C. Farley

Looking Good Feeling Good

Virginia Center for Plastic Surgery
Newsletter

Rhytidectomy: A Good Look at Facelifts

As people age, the effects of gravity, sun exposure, and the stresses of daily life can be seen in their faces. Deep creases form between the nose and mouth; the jawline grows slack and jowly; deep wrinkles appear in the cheeks; there are other noticeable areas of loose skin and wrinkles; and folds and fat deposits appear around the neck. Technically known as rhytidectomy, a facelift can "set back the clock" by repairing and improving these signs of aging.

A facelift can make you look younger and fresher, and it may enhance your self-confidence in the process. But it can't give you a totally different look, nor can it restore the health and vitality of your youth. Before you decide to have surgery, think carefully about your expectations and discuss them with your surgeon.

Typically, people are between the ages of 40 and 60, but facelifts can be performed on patients much older - into their 70s and 80s - with very successful results. The ideal candidates for facelifts are men and women who have some excess and sagging skin on their face and neck but whose skin still has some elasticity and whose bone structure is strong and well defined.

Facelifts do not correct conditions such as sagging eyebrows, excess skin and fatty deposits in the upper and lower eyelids, or wrinkles around the mouth. These conditions are corrected by other surgical procedures such as a forehead lift, eyelid surgery, or nose reshaping, which can be done in conjunction with a facelift. Your plastic surgeon can assess your specific needs in a private consultation. For a successful outcome, you need to be very clear about what you don't like about your appearance and your expectations. Your doctor can then determine whether your expectations can realistically be achieved.

Your plastic surgeon will assess the thickness, texture and elasticity of your skin, and the severity of wrinkles and folds. Your hairline will be examined to determine where incisions can be discreetly placed. If your hair is very short, you may want to let it grow enough to cover your incisions while they heal. In addition, your bone structure and underlying tissues need to be considered in developing an individual surgical plan.

(continued on page 2)

Get free health and medical tips at my Web site:
www.vcps.com

Use Good-for-You Ginger in Gingerbread or a Ginger Tea

In China and many other parts of the world, ginger is well known for its power to calm an upset stomach. Common anti-nausea medications work through the central nervous system, causing drowsiness. Ginger acts directly on the digestive tract. In one study, people who took 1 gram of ginger before surgery had less nausea afterward. It is useful for chemotherapy patients and for pregnant women having morning sickness because it will not harm the fetus.

Ginger's reputation as a remedy for motion sickness and seasickness is well documented by a famous Danish study. Ginger extract is available in health-food stores.

Next time you're feeling a little queasy, brew a cup of **Ginger Tea**:

Slice some ginger root.
Put it in a tea ball and place in a teapot.
Pour boiling water over the tea ball.
Let it sit for 10 minutes.
Sweeten with honey.

Christmas Gingerbread

In a pan, melt:

1/2 cup butter
2/3 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup molasses

Cool slightly, then beat in 1 egg.

In a bowl, sift together:

Almost one cup of white
Almost one cup of whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon ground ginger
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Stir sifted mixture into the melted mix.

Mix 2/3 cup warm milk with 1 teaspoon baking soda and add to the mix.

Stir in 1/2 cup dried fruit.

Bake in a pan lined with wax paper for 1 hour at 300 degrees.

Cool, remove from the pan, and discard the wax paper.

For best flavor, store in an airtight tin for a week before serving.



Facelifts *(continued from page 1)*

In preparing for surgery, your surgeon will check for medical conditions such as uncontrolled high blood pressure, blood clotting problems, or the tendency to form excessive scars. He/she needs to know if you are taking any drugs or medications, especially aspirin or other drugs that affect clotting. Smokers will be asked to stop smoking well in advance of surgery because it inhibits the healing process. Remember that complications can occur with any surgery. There is always the risk of infection plus reactions to anesthesia.

Depending upon their complexity, facelifts usually take several hours. They can be performed under local anesthesia, combined with a sedative to make you drowsy and relaxed. In this case, you'll be awake but insensitive to pain, but may feel some tugging or occasional discomfort. Some surgeons prefer a general anesthesia; in which case, you'll sleep through the operation.

Incisions usually begin above the hairline at the temples, extend in a natural line in front of the ear (or just inside the cartilage at the front of the ear), and continue behind the earlobe to the lower scalp. If the neck needs work, a small incision may be made under the chin. Through the incisions, the surgeon is able to free the skin from the underlying tissues and fat deposits are removed as needed. After the skin has been pulled up and back, the excess is removed. Stitches secure the layers of tissue and close the incisions; metal clips may be used on the scalp. A thin tube may be temporarily placed under the skin behind your ear for drainage and head bandages help minimize bruising and swelling. Stitches and tubes are removed within about 5 days.

There isn't usually significant discomfort after surgery; if there is, it can be lessened with pain medication. Some numbness of the skin is quite normal; it will disappear in a few weeks or months. It is recommended that you keep your head elevated and as still as possible for a couple of days after surgery to keep the swelling down. You may appear pale, bruised and puffy in the beginning, but this will diminish over a few weeks.

Since the healing process is gradual and varies among individuals, you should expect to wait at least several weeks for an accurate picture of your "new look." You'll have some scars from your facelift, but they're usually hidden by your hair or in the natural creases of your face and ears and will fade in time. Some doctors offer what are referred to as "mini" or "weekend" facelifts where the procedure is not as extensive and the healing period is much shorter.

Having a facelift doesn't stop the clock. Your face will continue to age with time, and you may want to repeat the procedure one or more times - perhaps five or ten years down the line. But in another sense, the effects of even one facelift are lasting because years later you'll continue to look better than if you'd never had a facelift at all.

To obtain more information about this procedure, give our office a call at 703-924-3144 or e-mail us at info@vcps.com.

For Better Health: Laugh!

We have heard that laughter is good for us, but various studies show that it also boosts immunity, signals the body to release feel-good chemicals plus chemicals that reduce blood clotting and inflammation. It is a pain reliever. A mild chuckle has benefits. But laughter researcher William Fry found it took 10 minutes on a rowing machine to elevate the heart rate as high as a good belly laugh.



Know How to Talk to Your Doctor

Your doctor may not be able to correctly treat your medical problem unless you can describe it effectively. Here are some questions you should be prepared to answer:

- Can you pinpoint exactly where the pain is?
- Can you describe how it feels?
- Can you compare it to another type of pain?
- How often does it occur?
- How long does it last?
- Is there anything you do that changes it?
- What makes it worse?
- When did you first notice the pain?
- What were you doing at the time?

Patients today are expected to know how their bodies work and to be active participants in their own care. An easy flow of conversation can provide the doctor with the necessary information. Most doctors make an initial diagnosis within one minute of talking to a patient. Questions asked after that are important and may change the initial diagnosis.

A Bloodless Cholesterol Test

PREVU, the new bloodless cholesterol test, can be done without a 12-hour fast and without drawing blood.

A foam pad is placed in the palm of the hand. A special liquid is added. The foam pad changes color and an electronic wand then reads the color change. The amount of sterol in the skin can be determined in five minutes. Sterol levels correlate with cholesterol levels.

Doctors discussed PREVU at the annual meeting of the American College of Cardiology. They hope the test will encourage more people to take preventive heart attack and stroke measures such as exercising and eating well.



CLIENT OF THE MONTH

Donna Spaulding

Donna had a breast augmentation in May. She had no problems with her recovery and was back to normal activities quickly after surgery.

Donna has won a \$250 credit towards another surgical procedure in the future.

Every month I will choose a very special *Client of the Month*. It's my way of acknowledging good friends and saying "thanks" to those who support me and my business with referrals, word of mouth and repeat business. Watch for your name here in an upcoming month - you might be my next *Client of the Month*!

VCPS News

After working at the Virginia Center for Plastic Surgery for over 5 years, Marci has decided to move on - literally. She is relocating in early 2006. She will remain with us through the beginning of the year to help Tiffany transition into her position. We welcome Tiffany to the practice.

A note from Dr. Desman: *I personally want to thank Marci for all that she has put into the practice and know that her personality has helped to make the Virginia Center for Plastic Surgery a warm and caring place for you. She will be missed.*

Exercise Helps You Think Better and Faster

If your job requires good judgment and quick thinking, you'll do it better if you exercise regularly.

Some people think regular exercise is for self-centered people who want to improve their appearance, but studies show that it increases brain function. As a "side effect," exercise reduces anxiety and depression and helps to ward off the mental effects of aging.



A report published in the *Journal of Exercise Physiology* looked at fitness scores of 884,000 students. They compared them to state-mandated test scores and found the fittest students scored much better than others.

A study of the cognitive consequences of exercise published in the journal *Acta Psychologica* shows that exercise facilitates thinking, especially information processing.

Other research shows that exercise can make the brains of older people act younger. Magnetic resonance imaging scans before and after six months of aerobic exercise show that the brain activity of older people was similar to that of 20-year-olds, according to the University of Illinois.