

Thanks for the Kind Words...

The results are exactly what I hoped for! It has been 3 months since my surgery. I am very pleased with my results. I feel comfortable exercising, and enjoy wearing clothes that flatter my new look. I have several friends who had breast surgery through the military medical facilities, but I elected for private care. If I get the chance, I will tell someone about your practice guarantee!

Thank you very much,

—Erin R. Moran

A Bit of Laughter...

An artist asked the gallery owner if there had been any interest in his paintings.

"Well, I have good news and bad news," the owner replied. "The good news is that a gentleman noticed your work and wondered if it would appreciate in value after your death. I told him it would, and he bought all 10 of your paintings."

"That's wonderful," the artist exclaimed. "What's the bad news?"

"The gentleman was your doctor."

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...

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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. Who was ruler of Egypt when the Great Pyramids near Giza were built??

a) Ramesses IV b) Tutenkahmen c) Imhotep d) Cheops

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 which of the nations listed does not feature an eagle on its national flag is a) Spain

Medical Question Corner...

Q: What are keloid scars and will I develop them from plastic surgery?

A: Keloid scars are thick, puckered, itchy clusters of scar tissue that grow beyond the incision (or wound) into healthy tissue. They are most often red or a darker color than the adjacent skin and are difficult to treat.

Hypertrophic scars are sometimes confused with keloids. The main difference is that the hypertrophic scar remains within the bounds of the wound or incision and is easier to treat.

Although keloid scars can develop from any type of surgery or injury, they have three main characteristics that may not affect you. One is that keloids only affect about 10% of the population and develop more often in darkly pigmented people. Second, they are more problematic for people with family histories of keloid scarring. The third characteristic of this type of scarring is that it usually occurs on the shoulders, over the breastbone, or on the earlobe.

If you feel that you fit within these descriptions, you should definitely discuss your concerns with your surgeon.

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 << your office phone number >>. Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!



Eric Desman, MD

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Thought for the Month...

Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation. It is better to be alone than in bad company.

George Washington

Looking Good Feeling Good

Virginia Center for Plastic Surgery
Newsletter

Does an Unsightly Scar Bother You? Scar Revision May Help

Scars seem to be a fact of life, whether caused by an accident, surgery or other trauma. The body's attempt to repair the damaged area results in imperfect skin. The severity of the resulting scar depends upon how your body responds to injury and its ability to repair the collagen - the support structure in the body's tissues. The way the scar forms and looks are also determined by how severe the injury was that caused the scar in the first place.

It's reassuring to know that some scars may actually become less noticeable naturally over time. Thus, depending on the severity of scarring, you may want to wait for a year or so before undergoing scar revision surgery. How much the appearance of a scar bothers you is, of course, a personal matter, and you don't have to live with unappealing scars.

Plastic surgeons have the ability to improve and minimize - but not totally erase - the appearance of scars through the injection or application of certain steroid medications or through surgical procedures known as scar revisions. Before undertaking scar revision surgery, you and your surgeon will need to take into consideration the size, depth, blood supply to the damaged skin, thickness, and color of the scars.

A facial scar is frequently considered a priority for scar revision because of its obvious location. Often it's a matter of simply cutting it out and closing it with tiny stitches, leaving a thinner, less noticeable scar. Or if the scar lies near a natural skin crease, the surgeon may be able to reposition it to run parallel to the crease where it is less conspicuous. Some facial scars can be softened using a technique called dermabrasion, which is the scraping of the top layers of the skin resulting in a smoother surface to the skin.

Depending on the type of injury or your body's healing ability, some scarring may take the form of contractures, keloid, or hypertrophic, which require special scar revision procedures. Contractures are the pulling of skin as the result of burns and may require skin grafts or a procedure called Z-plasty (transposing

(continued on page 2)

Get free health and medical tips at my Web site:

www.vcps.com

Beef for Dinner: It Brings Vitamins, Minerals, Satisfaction



Scientists have just begun to figure out why high-protein diets were successful (at least for a time) for so many people. They've found that it wasn't cutting the carbs that did it. It was because protein makes you feel fuller. And it's something of an appetite suppressant as well, according to studies published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Their study showed that people felt less hungry when they increased intake from protein from 15 percent to 30 percent. They did not decrease their consumption of carbohydrates.

That's good news for most of us, because we're back in the saddle again. We're stampeding back to our steaks. Before you fire up the grill, however, remember that good health doesn't mean downing a pound of porterhouse for dinner. Keep portions at reasonable sizes.

Beef, pork, and other red meats are rich in iron, and iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency in the U.S. It's one of the main reasons why people drag themselves to the doctor. Without enough iron, they're tired much of the time.

Meat contains heme iron, which is the most absorbable kind. Plant foods contain nonheme iron, which is less absorbable. Beef also contains vitamins B6 and B12, niacin, and zinc.

Slow-Cooker Beef Pot Roast

Trim fat from a 2 1/2-pound chuck roast and brown in cooking oil.

Slice 12 ounces of potatoes, 8 small carrots, 2 small onions, and 2 stalks of celery. Place in bottom of cooker. Cut the meat to fit on top.

Combine 3/4 cup water, dry wine, or tomato juice with 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce, a teaspoon of instant beef bouillon granules, and a teaspoon dried basil, crushed. Pour over the meat and vegetables.

Cover and cook on low for 10 to 12 hours. For gravy, skim fat from juices and add 1/4 cup flour and water to make 1 1/2 cups. Cook for 1 minute more to thicken.

Scar Revision (continued from page 1)

adjacent skin flaps). Keloid is a thick, raised scarring that grows beyond the edges of a wound or incision and may recur even with scar revision surgery. Hypertrophic scars are also thick and raised, but stay within the bounds of the wound or incision and are easier to treat. If you are considering surgery for any of these conditions, it is especially important to thoroughly discuss the options with your surgeon.

Regardless of whether your situation involves dermabrasion or more complicated procedures, be honest in discussing your expectations with the surgeon and be sure they're realistic. As in any surgical procedure, your doctor will need to know your physical condition and may need to check you for disease or other disorders to ensure the safety of the surgery.

Scar revision procedures are normally safe, but there is always the possibility of complications, including infection, bleeding, a reaction to the anesthesia, or the recurrence of an unsightly scar. Numbness is also possible, and while it usually subsides within the first few months, it could be a permanent condition.

You must avoid exposing the treated area to the sun, including indirect sunlight and tanning beds for about a year. Scar tissue takes approximately a year to mature and sun exposure can further damage the healing area.

Remember that no scar can be removed completely. The degree of improvement depends on the size and direction of your scar, your particular skin type, and how well you care for the wound after your procedure. Also know that the final results of your surgery may not be apparent for a year or more.

Insurance does not normally cover cosmetic procedures. However, if scar revision is required to minimize scarring from an injury or to improve your ability to function, check your policy or call your carrier to verify possible full or partial coverage.

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

Screening for Down Syndrome

A study by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) shows that a new blood test combined with an ultrasound that is performed on pregnant women in their first trimester can identify 87 percent of fetuses affected with Down syndrome.

Adding a second blood test in the second trimester can lead to detection of 95 percent of affected fetuses. The new tests could greatly reduce the number of women who undergo amniocentesis, which may cause miscarriage.

The risk of Down syndrome increases with age. The NIH recommends that pregnant women 35 and older be offered amniocentesis. But about 80 percent of Down babies are born to women under age 35, who have far more babies.

About 70 percent of pregnant women are now given sonograms to measure fluid that develops in the clear space in the tissue at the back of a fetus's neck. Fetuses with a high risk of Down syndrome tend to have more fluid there.

Good Investment: Dental Care

If you visit your dentist on a regular basis, you are doing yourself a favor in four ways. First, you are saving your teeth so you can chew properly, which is an important factor in nutrition.



Second, when you visit your dentist, he or she can check your gums. Periodontal disease can result in lost teeth and is a significant factor in heart disease. Periodontal bacteria can lead to blood clots, increasing the risk for heart attack and stroke.

People with diabetes should be particularly watchful for periodontal disease. They are more prone to infection, and periodontal disease makes it more difficult to stabilize blood glucose levels.

Third, properly caring for your teeth results in big financial savings in the future. Root canals, bridgework, dental implants, and dentures can cost thousands of dollars.

Fourth, by properly caring for your teeth, you will ultimately save yourself a lot of pain and inconvenience.

Kids' Sore Throats and Strep

Researchers at Harvard Medical School say 53 percent of kids with sore throats aren't given a test for strep before antibiotics are given. Antibiotics effective against strep include penicillin, amoxicillin, and erythromycin. Antibiotics won't work on a sore throat that is caused by a virus.

Sleep Apnea and Stroke Risk

Doctors at Yale Center for Sleep Medicine have found that people with obstructive sleep apnea have twice the risk of strokes as steady breathers.

People with mild apnea may waken four or five times an hour. Those with severe apnea may wake up every 30 seconds, often without becoming fully conscious. It's a cycle of oxygen deprivation; adrenaline-fueled wakening to restore breathing; an increase in blood pressure from the adrenaline; then a return to sleep.



The cycles lead to inflammation and clogging of the arteries. Over time, they could lead to stroke and death.

CLIENT OF THE MONTH

Mr. McCutchen

Mr. McCutchen is a 31-year-old gentleman who exercises routinely, but still had a "spare tire" around his midsection. After careful research and consideration, he decided to proceed with liposuction of his abdomen and flanks. It has been about a month since surgery and he is delighted.

He is back in the gym and his waist has gone down 2 inches.

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*!

Would You Like a Free Skin Evaluation?

We are pleased to announce that an aesthetician offering a variety of services, including the VCPS signature peel, will be joining us by March 1st. The first 25 people who call in will receive a free skin evaluation, and if they are appropriate candidates, a free glycolic peel. Call 703-924-3144 to schedule your appointment for a free skin evaluation.

February is American Heart Month

Psychocardiology: New Term Puts a Different Slant on Heart Disease

From folk medicine to modern research, the impact of a positive outlook on life has long been suspected to have a big influence on heart health.



Doctors today are finding that psychological factors may be just as important as diet and exercise when it comes to preventing heart attacks.

Fear is a factor. After an earthquake or hurricane, heart attack deaths are more than three times the usual toll. On the day of the 1994 earthquake in Los Angeles County, cardiovascular deaths jumped from 15.6 per day to 51.

Negative emotions play a role in heart health. Doctors at the University of Birmingham in England find that depression at least doubles an otherwise healthy person's heart attack risk.

Hostility and anger are important factors. Doctors at Duke University find that high levels of hostility increase the risk of dying from heart disease by 29 percent. In people 60 or younger, hostility increases the risk by 50 percent.

Stress is a factor. A large study led by Canada's McMaster University shows that in the year before heart attacks, 30 percent of patients had been under significant stress from work, family, financial troubles, and other causes.

It doesn't have to be that way. Doctors say people handle stress differently. Those who handle it well have a sense of control over their lives, rather than feeling they are victims of circumstance.

Hostile and depressed people interpret more situations as stressful. The resulting increase in stress hormones such as adrenaline can wreak havoc on the heart. They also have higher levels of C-reactive protein, which is associated with cardiovascular risk.

Be optimistic. Laugh a little, and keep your heart healthy.