



the *future* facing  
by carla caruile

## how outlooks on cosmetic surgery are changing

*You live in Colorado.*

You feel the low humidity drying your skin.  
You notice the bright sun aging your face.  
You see commercials for cosmetic procedures.  
And you find yourself wondering: *Should I?*

Good question, says Hans Kuisle, M.D., FACS, a board-certified plastic and reconstruction surgeon with Avista Surgery Center in Boulder. Given the many corrective measures and preventive options available today, it's an option both men and women are exploring with far greater frequency.

And, he notes, they're doing so much earlier than prior generations. Instead of waiting until 60 for a major face-lift, many are taking steps in their early adult years to keep their skin looking

younger from the start. They're making skin care part of their everyday regimen. And they're checking out Botox® to reduce the effect of underlying, repetitive motion of the face that can make one look older.

"I really see the shift as a natural extension of the way we think about health today," Kuisle says. "Our knowledge of nutrition and its effects on the body is much greater than just a decade ago."

Baby boomers have played a role in the revolution, as well, he adds.

"Aging is inevitable," says Kuisle. "But this is the first generation that's comfortable with making themselves look as good as they feel. Their health is better; they're more active. Since looking good is part of that, cosmetic surgery has become much more acceptable." >



## \* what matters to men?

“Men typically want to have a little less of a procedure,” Kuisle says. “They hope for as little downtime as possible.

“One of the most common procedures we perform with men focuses on the area under the neck. We’ll be sitting in my office, and he’ll grab the wattle at his throat and say, ‘I want to get rid of this.’

“The corrective procedure,” Kuisle says, “is called a T-Zplasty. It allows us to remove the excess tissue, then suture the muscles beneath the tissue so that the area is flat. That allows us to restore an angular, masculine neck without going to a full face-lift.

“That’s not to say that women aren’t concerned about the neck area. They are. But women are less accepting of an incision on the neck. So we try to place incisions more remotely and still achieve that tighter, younger appearance.”

## \* here comes the sun

For Colorado residents, sun exposure is unavoidable. But the effects can be minimized with proper attention.

“We know that ultraviolet exposure stimulates degeneration of the skin,” says Kuisle. “This results in loss of elasticity and smoothness, as well as pigment change. It’s also the main causation for skin cancer, with basal and squamous cells most common, but the more dangerous malignant melanoma possible.

“Our focus now is on protecting the skin more and starting earlier,” he says.

## \* cosmetic caution

Press Kuisle about his concerns on the cosmetic surgery culture and he pauses before answering. “It concerns me that there’s an explosion of ‘experts’ in skin and plastic surgery. It’s unfortunate that there are professionals calling themselves ‘plastic surgeons’ when they are neither board-certified nor qualified in an area of practice.

“What people really need to consider is the quality and value of the procedure they’re purchasing. You want results. You want them to last. That’s worth the time it takes to find the right physician.” **vev**

## 10 questions to ask when choosing a plastic surgeon

1. Are you a member surgeon of The American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)?
2. Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, where?
3. Is your surgical facility accredited? By what agency or organization?
4. How many procedures of this type have you performed?
5. Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
6. What will be expected of me to get optimal results?
7. What are the risks involved with my procedure?
8. How long of a recovery period can I expect?
9. What kind of help will I need during my recovery?
10. Will I need to take time off work? If so, how long?

The plastic surgeon you select should:

- Answer all of your questions thoroughly and clearly.
- Ask about your thoughts to recommended treatment.
- Offer alternatives, where appropriate, without pressuring you to consider unneeded or additional procedures.
- Welcome questions about your procedure and his or her professional qualifications, experience, costs and payment policies.
- Make clear the risks of surgery and possible outcomes.
- Give you information about the procedure you want.
- Leave the final decision to you.

As ABPS surgeon members emphasize, “Remember, it is your body, your safety and your life.”

Source: *The American Board of Plastic Surgery*