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MEN AND COSMETIC SURGERY

By Michael W. Sasser



Not many years ago, cosmetic surgery was considered enhancement almost exclusively sought out by women. While reconstructive surgery was not uncommon in necessary cases for both genders, men's interest was muted, statistics illustrate.

However, the 21st century has seen a shift in that sensibility, and some of the top practitioners in the field have noted the trend.

"I did a segment for the local news station in Chicago about 14 years ago on men and cosmetic surgery," said Dr. Rodger Wade Pielet, M.D., FACS, who practices in Miami Beach and in the Windy City. "At that time, men made up about 25 percent of my patients. Today that number is more like 35 or 40 percent."

Another top cosmetic surgeon, Dr. Sam Gershenbaum, founder and director of the Aventura Center for Cosmetic Surgery, cited a similar increase in the male cosmetic surgery trend.

"I've been practicing for 18 years and back then, my patients were about

90 percent women," Gershenbaum said. "I'd say that today men make up about 35 or 40 percent of my patients. It certainly has changed a lot over the years."

Pielet said that he believes the increase is related to the "whole health and wellness focus of people today." People, both men and women, are eating better, more focused on nutrition and on looking and feeling better. Cosmetic surgery plays a role in that new sensibility, Pielet said, and that holds true with men.

"Clearly in men, surgery goes beyond the physical that they see in the mirror – it relates to the whole feeling of self-confidence," Pielet said. "There is a whole theory that attractiveness is a factor in competing in the marketplace. While I believe that a better qualified candidate, for example, will probably get the job, what if it comes down to two equally qualified candidates? I do think appearance plays a role there. It's true in all animals and I think it's true in people, whether we realize it or not. There is a bias toward attractiveness."



Gershenbaum said that the increase in the popularity of cosmetic procedures in men isn't because recent years have seen an increase in procedures aimed at men. "It's not about specific procedures, it's that there weren't a lot of doctors who did the procedures."

"I don't think that there is anything that is all that new," Piolet added.

Gershenbaum said that he does some procedures that not many doctors nationally offer. "We probably do more pec implants than most other doctors in the country, and we also do calf implants and gludial implants," he said. "I've designed some implants and once you get a name for something like that, the more notoriety and exposure you get. Word of mouth marketing is the best kind and over the years we have acquired a large male clientele."

Piolet pointed out, however, that the increase in popularity of male cosmetic procedures varies regionally, as is the case with cosmetic surgery in general. Statistically speaking, California and the West Coast and South Florida see more cosmetic work done than say, the center of the country.

"It's probably different in Miami than it is in Chicago, for example," Piolet said.

There are, of course, also sociological influences on the increase in the demand for procedures for men. "It's more socially acceptable, more mainstream, and not just with way out-there flamboyant men," he said. "Someone does it and then tells friends and it spreads, although men don't talk as much as women."

Gershenbaum said that commonly requested procedures by men include pec, calf and gludial implants, rhinoplasty, liposuction and, these days, the Brazilian butt lift.

However, Gershenbaum said, "Men seek a wide range of procedures. I just did a mini-facelift for example."

Piolet said that demand for pectoral procedures comes in waves and that liposuction is probably the most common request he receives from men. "If men have chests or abdomens with a lot of fat, it's popular to have work done to address that. In Miami, rhinoplasty is still very common."

Perhaps more so than in the past, today's cosmetic surgery clientele, men and women, are particularly interested in appearing as if they have not had any work done. Fortunately, skilled professionals and modern techniques make this a demand that good cosmetic surgeons can address.

"The best compliment one can receive in terms of the results of a procedure is that it doesn't look like the patient has had any surgery," Piolet said. "There isn't a tremendous amount of pain associated with cosmetic procedures. People's biggest fear is looking like they have had cosmetic surgery. I see this at the national level."

Piolet pointed out that actually the popularity of cosmetic surgery has increased in both men and women, but that the rate of increase for men has been greater. "Men are seeking things out like fillers and other procedures at a far greater rate than before."

While men's interest in cosmetic surgery has increased across the board, Gershenbaum said that he finds that it is definitely more prevalent in the gay community. "I think it's because many gay men are more in tune with

their looks and with their bodies and I think they are more willing to seek out procedures to enhance themselves," he said.

For more information on Dr. Piolet's practice visit www.drpielet.com. For more information on Dr. Gershenbaum visit www.aventuracosmeticsurgery.com.



DR. RODGER WADE PIELET

