

MEDICAL AWARDS INTRODUCTION



Despite a brief dip in popularity in 2014, last year saw over 15.9 million surgical and minimally invasive cosmetic procedures in the United States alone – that accounts for about one procedure per every 16 adults, or a combined US\$13.5bn spent on achieving the ‘perfect’ look. Plastic surgeons certainly have little to be afraid of – surveys highlight how society increasingly accepts aesthetic surgery as a means of enhancing rather than overhauling our appearance. Gone are the gravity-defying enhancements and motionless foreheads of yesteryear: the fastest growing treatment now is buttock implants. Another interesting development is the number of cosmetic procedures performed on men, which has increased more than 325% since 1997, according to the American

Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. Such procedures include Botox, Xeomin and fillers treatments, as well as a growing desire for hair-free torsos, with 17% of all laser-hair removal procedures now performed on men. The study also showed that the number of people aged 65 and over receiving eyelid surgeries and facelifts has more than doubled over the last two decades, but there are many more younger people too: statistics point to a 41% increase in Botox in the 19-34 age group between 2011 and 2015. One surgeon cites a persistent fear among anxious millennials who arrive in clinics wailing “I don’t want to look like my mother!”, but equally “I don’t want to look like plastic!”

One of the fastest growing and most innovative sectors is breast augmentation. Our feature interview with Dr Tal Roudner provides a fascinating insight into the combination and multidisciplinary approaches to surgery that have been gaining traction this year – that is, using more than one procedure to achieve natural-looking, effective results. It’s an exciting time for breast enhancements and reductions, with more subtle looks, less scarring and more choice in the shape of implants. Women know what they want, and although trends and lifestyles differ all over the globe, thanks to new developments and procedures they are finally able to get it. In addition, men now make up more than 40% of aesthetic breast reduction surgeries for the first time ever, highlighting how an issue which

can seriously and negatively affect someone’s life is now far more accepted and mainstream. Another growing trend is lip fillers – we live in the age of the selfie, bombarded constantly with images both of ourselves and others, which draws ever more penetrating light on our facial insecurities. As Dr Roudner describes, the eternal challenge remains for surgeons to work closely with patients to ensure any procedure is thoroughly tested and patients are equally as educated as to the right reasons for surgery and to the process behind it.