

# Minimally-Invasive Cosmetic Procedures:

## Short Term Fixes For Long Term Conditions

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The public is being bombarded with procedures claiming to erase the signs of aging. Some of them are effective; some are not. Some are more costly than others. Some last only a short time; some last for years.

Worldwide, there is a growing trend to demean the use of surgical incisions in correcting sagging skin and skin resurfacing procedures that take a couple of weeks to heal ... and many of my colleagues are naively jumping on the bandwagon.

Claims that drooping deeply wrinkled skin can be corrected with an injection or with a “minimally-invasive” procedure that can be done on a “drive-through” basis are bringing millions of people into the offices of doctors and skin care experts, only to have those same patients return disappointed. In just a few short weeks the minimally-invasive procedure didn’t achieve what was promised. When this unfortunate event occurs, the patient loses trust in the doctor who performed the procedure and in the company whose claims caused them to seek out a doctor to use it. In many cases, irreparable damage is done to the reputation of the doctor, to the medical professions, and to the company who manufactured the product. So what is a consumer to do? What is a doctor, who is trying to build up a “cosmetic” practice to do? The answer is: *Beware of the “quick-fix.”* A short-term gain for a long-term problem is neither medically or financially prudent. In many cases the “quick-fix” ends up costing more ... in money and credibility.

A physician/surgeon has an obligation to explain *the best way* to achieve the patient’s wishes. If a minimally-invasive procedure is indicated, it should be offered. If, however, a *traditional surgical procedure* is indicated, it should be offered in lieu of one that will only last a few weeks, or months. Quite simply, it is a matter of recommending *the right procedure or product* for those who place their trust in a professional, regardless of the monetary benefit.

Few things in life can match the fulfillment that a surgeon feels by improving the quality of life for one’s fellow human beings by doing the right thing. Although I have personally performed nearly 20,000 plastic surgical procedures of the face, nose, head and neck during a career that spans thirty-three years, every day, when I go into the operating room to perform surgery, I feel the same degree of excitement as I did 33 years ago.

Keep in mind that plastic surgery is *real surgery* and that problems can arise from many of the “quick-fix” procedures. Reports of problems with materials that are injected into the face and procedures that rely on strings and threads inserted into the face are becoming more common. The long-term results of “short scar” or “no scar” are often short-lived and disappointing. So, the advice to patients and doctors, alike, is ask about the potential complications and longevity.

The aftercare management of plastic surgery procedures is often the key to a trouble-free recovery. In this writer's opinion, plastic surgery should not be viewed as "drive-through surgery." I've never liked the idea of performing an operation on a patient, putting them in a car and sending them off without my knowing how to find them, if needed. It is, also, asking too much of an *untrained* friend or family member to care for a post-operative patient.

I am as passionate about performing responsible plastic surgery and teaching people about my profession as ever. My family and staff chuckle when someone asks if I am still working. Let me answer it this way. I am doing as much surgery as ever. And, I *personally* perform the surgery—*all of it*. In more than thirty years of practice, I have never delegated an operation *that I was paid to perform* to an assistant... not once.

It is true, however, that I do not perform *all types* of plastic surgery. I am a *facial plastic surgeon*. So, when patients wish to have *both facial and* body plastic surgery, I do the facial surgery. The body (and/or breast) procedures are performed by one of my associates Dr. Stephen Metzinger, Dr. Nathan Patterson, or Dr. Melanie Petro.

The success of any surgical procedure depends upon obtaining the correct information about the operation and/or product that is being advocated and the experience of surgeon/doctor who will be performing it. I invite you to refer to my other articles on this blog and learn how to get the information you need.

If you would like any more information on this or other health related topics, call the McCollough Institute for Appearance and Health at 251-967-7600, email [info@mccolloughinstitute.com](mailto:info@mccolloughinstitute.com) or visit our website [www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com](http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com). If you would like to ask Dr. McCollough a question, please submit the question using our online contact form at <http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com/contactus.html>.