

## facelifting: the modern approach

The natural-looking results a modern facelift can achieve are significantly different from the windswept look of the past, says **Dr John Flynn** from Queensland. Jessica Rule reports.

**M**any people are of the misapprehension that facelifts are extreme and highly invasive procedures that result in a windswept appearance, says Dr John Flynn from Queensland.

'A windswept appearance is not the norm, and if a patient does end up with this look it's likely they've been in the hands of an unskilled surgeon,' he says. 'On the contrary, when a facelift is performed by a skilled and practised surgeon using modern techniques, a casual observer shouldn't be able to tell if someone has undergone a facelift – they should simply look fresh and rested.'

**'A key consideration is that facelifts are not a "one size fits all". A customised approach should be taken for each individual patient'**

Dr Flynn says there are many techniques available to achieve these results, although a key consideration is that facelifts are not a 'one size fits all'. 'A customised, personally tailored approach should be taken for each individual patient,' he says.

According to Dr Flynn, today's facelift is not as invasive than in days gone by and is most commonly performed as day surgery. 'In my experience, most patients report that facelift surgery is not the traumatic experience it can sometimes be branded as and due to new technologies bruising is minimised,' he explains.

'When performed correctly, a facelift can achieve a refined, natural-looking appearance without the need to hide away for lengthy periods to recuperate. In fact, most patients can usually resume their regular social lives in around two weeks.'

An even less invasive option for patients wishing to tighten sagging skin on the face and neck is the thread lift, and Dr Flynn says the same tailored approach applies. 'There are many different techniques for applying thread lifts, and the technique used depends on the patient's individual characteristics and requirements,' he says.

'A thread lift involves a long nylon-like material featuring small barbs that engage the facial tissue,' explains Dr Flynn. 'When firmly anchored beneath the skin they can provide a subtle lift to early jowling, drooping brows and a sagging neck. A thread lift isn't exchangeable for a facelift, but it can offer an effective option for those wanting a less invasive method of refreshing their appearance.'

Dr Flynn says the results of a thread lift won't be as long lasting as a facelift, with the threads usually requiring replacement every three or four years. 'The advantages are that there's generally no hospital visit involved and no incisions. Additionally, there is typically no scarring or bruising,' he says.

'One possible side effect of a thread lift procedure is some temporary skin bunching or pleating at the thread insertion site, although this usually resolves itself over a couple of weeks.'

While a facelift or thread lift can offer excellent options for patients, they will not remedy all skin ageing concerns, says Dr Flynn. 'The texture and tone of the skin and complexion is a fundamental area to address,' he says. 'I've implemented a Soft Skin Program for my patients, which not only addresses the quality of the skin but other contributors such as pigmentation and broken capillaries.'

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Minimising risks and complications before, during and after surgery is of paramount importance. 'First, if a patient smokes they must stop as smoking interferes with the body's scar formation and ability to heal; smokers tend to have lesser quality skin to begin with,' he says.

'Aspirin and other such blood thinners should be avoided because they can cause more extensive bruising. I also advise patients to cease taking vitamin supplements. This is because those such as Vitamin B cause flushing in the superficial blood vessels. Usually this has a positive effect, but after a surgical procedure it can worsen post-operative bruising in some cases.'

In aiming to demystify and reduce the stigma attached to facelift surgeries, Dr Flynn hopes clients will be more forthcoming in considering the procedure and choose their surgeons wisely to achieve optimum, natural-looking results. **acsm**



BEFORE



Twelve days AFTER thread lift by Dr Flynn