

# THE MODERN FACELIFT

QUEENSLAND COSMETIC DOCTOR **DR JOHN FLYNN** EXPLAINS HOW COMBINING CONSERVATIVE SURGICAL TECHNIQUES AND MINIMALLY INVASIVE FACIAL REJUVENATION CAN ACHIEVE DRAMATIC RESULTS. GEMMA GARKUT REPORTS.

According to Dr John Flynn, yesteryear's surgery-focused facelifts are increasingly being replaced by a combination approach to include more conservative surgical techniques with minimally invasive facial rejuvenation procedures.

'The modern facelift is very different from previous times,' says Dr Flynn. 'It relies far less on extensive surgery and more on judicious alterations combining laser resurfacing, dermal fillers and other minimally invasive techniques so that what is essentially known as a "facelift" is no longer a purely surgical experience.'

Combining a selection of different modalities to achieve a result specific to the individual patient is the key to a modern facelift, which means a thorough consultation process is very important. 'Understandably, there is a fear factor associated with facelifts these days as a result of the unfortunate Hollywood "plastic" look. This look exemplifies older, much less accurate facelifting techniques,' he says.

'Depending on the patient's concerns, conservative surgery combined with minimally invasive options such as laser resurfacing, thread lifting, dermal fillers, muscle relaxants and an active skincare regimen can produce superior results,' he adds.

Aesthetically speaking, Dr Flynn says the eyes are the most expressive and therefore the most noticed of the facial features, which makes them a central feature in

facial rejuvenation. 'There is the concept of emotionality associated with the eyes, reflected in the age-old saying, "the eyes are the windows to the soul",' he says. 'As we get older, noticeable ageing effects occur in and around the eyes, which usually consist of drooping upper eyelids and the descent of the eyebrows. These effects contribute to a look of tiredness or ill health and can be improved with modern facial rejuvenation techniques.'

Dr Flynn assesses how these changes individually affect each patient's eyes by looking at how the fatty tissues bulge and the skin sags, as well as how the position of the brow affects the eyes. 'Addressing all these elements allows me to determine which combination is right for the patient. For example, they might require a laser tightening treatment to tighten and "lift" the skin, and dermal fillers to reshape and recontour the eye area,' he explains.

But one of the most influential aspects of rejuvenating the face is the quality and texture of the skin. 'The skin is the fabric that covers the entire face, so when looking to perform a combination of procedures on the face we have to look at how to correct the quality of the fabric as well,' explains Dr Flynn. 'This is where laser resurfacing can be extremely effective. Even if a patient doesn't necessarily require a lift or tightening, most people who live in Australia's harsh climate could benefit from laser rejuvenation to renew skin texture and tone.'



BEFORE



AFTER facelift and laser resurfacing by Dr Flynn



BEFORE



AFTER facelift, neck lift and laser resurfacing by Dr Flynn

Dr Flynn offers laser rejuvenation of two strengths, which cater to different needs. 'I use the Smart Xide Hot Dot fractional laser system, which can perform gentler treatments to improve skin tone and even out the complexion, and also more substantial treatments to induce collagen production for a complete facial rejuvenation,' he explains.

The laser works by creating tiny holes, or 'dots', in the skin's surface which penetrate deep into the dermis. It leaves the skin around each dot intact, enabling the surrounding tissue to heal these microscopic thermal injuries by stimulating the production of new collagen.

'The body's natural healing process creates new, healthy tissue which replaces skin imperfections,' Dr Flynn explains. 'The fractional laser allows us to treat the effects of ageing

on a wide scale with reduced recovery time compared with traditional CO<sub>2</sub> laser resurfacing, which I typically assign to a bygone era of cosmetic enhancement.'

While downtime is significantly less compared with traditional CO<sub>2</sub> laser treatment, Dr Flynn says patients should expect at least four days of recovery time after a typical treatment to allow the skin to heal.

'There is a whole new paradigm for facial rejuvenation which focuses on a combination of conservative but effective surgical adjustments combined with minimally invasive techniques to combat the effects of ageing, while enhancing and preserving a person's individuality,' says Dr Flynn. 'By embracing this new way of thinking, we can create dramatic yet natural-looking results.' **acsm**