

Men and plastic surgery

By Charmaine Yabsley | First published: August 21st, 2011



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We look at some of the most popular procedures in Australian men and the risks.

When Shane Warne started stepping out with Liz Hurley, all eyes derailed from his glamorous girlfriend, to Warne's taut, smooth skin, whiter-than-white smile and shrinking frame. Has Warne joined the growing number of men searching for everlasting youth?

"In Australia, and internationally, more men are having cosmetic surgery," says Dr. Joseph Hkeik, a Fellow of the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Founder and Medical Director of All Saints Cosmedical clinics. "Ten years ago, I had no male patients. Now, my customer base is around 35 to 40 per cent male."

Dr Scott Ingram of Form and Function Clinic, Brisbane has also seen an increase in the number of men seeking the fountain of youth. "We are seeing more men in the clinic, looking to do aesthetic procedures, as part of maintenance and preventative measures," he says.

Blokes and Botox

Why, in a country famous for its image of ocker, sun-weathered blokes, are men now booking Botox appointments and resurfacing treatments? "Men often get procedures if their girlfriends or wives have had them and want to look as youthful," says Hkeik. "I think that men are feeling insecure about some aspect of their appearance," says psychologist Victoria Kasunic. "Ten years ago men weren't judged on the way they looked, but on their ability to provide or achieve on the sports field."

Both surgeons agreed that their customers are divided into two categories: the younger generation who are happy to shell out for preventative treatments; "then there's the older generation, who are trying to compete with a younger generation for jobs, as well as looking younger for their partner," says Hkeike.

A quick fix

It's not just facial treatments such as Botox or fillers either. More men are booking predominately "female procedures", such as laser treatments, hair removal and liposuction to remove 'man boobs'. And forget booking a 'holiday' in order to receive and recover from an injection of youth. "We can do Botox, fillers – what we call a liquid facelift, where we chisel the jaw for a youthful appearance – in a lunchbreak."

Yet, while more men are happy to book in for a lunchtime lift, are they happy to share their plastic surgeon's number over a pint? "The majority of my older patients want a natural look. They don't want their friends or colleagues to know that they've had work done," says Hkeike. "The younger generation are not ashamed to talk about their treatments. I get a lot of referrals from my younger clients and much, much less from the older clients."

Common male procedures:

Botox

What it is: A minute amount of botulium toxin is injected into the muscle (usually around the eyes or forehead) which paralyses or weakens the muscle.

Risks: "If you do get any side effects, which are rare, such as asymmetry or drooping, you can wait for it to wear off," says Ingram.

Cost: from \$175.

Fillers

What it is: Those lines you have even when you're not smiling, are called static lines. "We fill or erase these with a lift, resurfacing or filling procedures," says Dr Ingram.

Risks: "Avoid off-the-shelf treatments which can cause small bumps under the skin to appear." Treatment lasts around nine to 12 months.

Cost: from \$1000.

Liposuction

What it is: Fat is melted under the skin using a laser, ultrasound system, then removed during surgery. "Often we perform the removal of fat around the breasts, stomach and love handles at the same time," says Dr. Hkeik. Recovery time is around four to six weeks.

Cost: \$3000-\$4000 plus hospital costs.

Rhinoplasty

What it is: "One hundred per cent of men who want their nose fixed tell me that they broke their nose when they were younger. But really, they want a prettier nose," says Ingram. During the procedure cartilage and bits of bone are taken out and the nose is reconstructed.

Cost: from \$3000 plus hospital costs.

Blepharoplasty

What it is: "In some older men, the skin and upper eyelid drape over the front of the eye, obscuring their vision," says Ingram. "I remove excess, redundant skin, muscle where required, and fat to make the eyelid less full. It takes around one week to recover."

Cost: \$2000-\$4000 surgical fee plus hospital costs.

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