

ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL HEALTHSOURCE

Aging Gracefully Made Easy with Skin Procedures

With people living longer, healthier lives today, the desire to look younger has dramatically increased. People demand smoother, younger-looking skin and fewer wrinkles. Today's technology allows plastic surgeons to fulfill these demands, making procedures like dermabrasion and laser resurfacing major fountains of youth.

Dermabrasion is a popular technique that improves acne scars, minimizes age spots, wrinkles, and skin growths, and removes tattoos. Plastic surgeons even out the skin surface by sanding the outer layer of skin, using a high-speed rotary instrument with an abrasive brush or wheel. A new, smoother layer of skin eventually replaces the old skin layer. This procedure is done on an outpatient basis, and an anesthetic is sprayed onto the area to be sanded.

Most people who choose dermabrasion experience a burning sensation, comparable to severe sunburn, following the procedure. Ointments and dressings are applied immediately following the treatment. The new layer of skin is pink at first, but healing occurs within 10 days, and the pink appearance fades 8-12 weeks after the procedure.

Laser resurfacing gently improves small wrinkles, scars, blemishes, and skin discoloration and tightens loose facial skin around the eyes and mouth with great precision. The newest carbon dioxide lasers deliver short bursts of high-energy laser light, which vaporize undesired skin tissue revealing fresh skin tissue.

Laser resurfacing boasts some major advantages over dermabrasion and other traditional skin rejuvenation techniques and the laser provides safety and precision in treating delicate areas around the lips and eyes.

Resurfacing is usually performed on an outpatient basis. Patients are treated with an anesthetic before the surgery, and dressings and ointments are used in the days following the procedure to keep the treated areas moist. The face may appear pink for several days to several months, however makeup may be used 7-10 days after the treatment to cover these areas.

Neither of these resurfacing techniques are substitutes for major surgeries like facelifts, but can, in conjunction with other facial treatments, improve results. Ask your plastic surgeon for the procedure that will be best for you.



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