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The lunch-hour lift

Minimally invasive cosmetic procedures have changed all the rules. *Shape* advisory board member **Gerald Imber, M.D.**, explains how you can wipe away years—and go back to the office looking great—in under an hour.

Throughout my career as a plastic surgeon, I've always encouraged my patients to consider small procedures earlier, rather than wait until radical corrections are necessary. The goal is to retain your youthful good looks throughout your adult life. Largely, this meant smaller surgeries. Now there is a lot that can be done without thinking of the operating room.

The first big change has been in the intelligent use of newer, more natural fillers in a more proactive manner. Some facial configurations simply lack angularity, while for others that angularity disappears with early aging and loss of skin elasticity. In either case, hyaluronic acid fillers can provide instant gratification. A little numbing cream, two syringes of filler, and your higher cheekbones and new angularity enhance the beauty of your face. As a side benefit, higher cheekbones lift the cheek skin and help reverse early jowls and nasolabial folds, those creases that run from the corners of the nose to the outside

of the lips. Thirty minutes later, you can go back to work or out to lunch without bruising or swelling.

The key, however, is finding the right physician. Nothing is so simple that skill and experience can be discounted. The reality is that when this procedure is poorly performed, the result can make anyone look silly. Your doctor must be experienced and see the whole picture of you. If you know a plastic surgeon or dermatologist who specializes in this work, that would be a good place to start. If not, ask for recommendations. Shopping around is okay; shopping for the best bargain may prove too costly.

Keep in mind, cheekbone enhancement with fillers is not a permanent solution. The effect lasts from six to 18 months. Fillers are not inexpensive either; generally fees vary by area and can range from \$1,000 to \$2,500, but they provide a terrific quick fix.

Another fast and easy procedure to achieve the same result on a

more permanent basis is fat transfer. Though the procedure takes less than an hour, it usually requires a bit of sedation. Still, I consider it the gold standard for augmenting cheekbones and chin, and filling nasolabial folds. How does it work? Typically, some of your own fat is removed with a syringe,

and the pure, living fat cells are injected into the new site. Those fat cells that establish a blood supply live permanently in the area. In my experience, up to 40 percent of the injected fat is permanent; the remainder dissipates over six months.

If those deep troughs under your eyes make you look tired, they can be eliminated quickly by injecting minute amounts of filler with a very fine needle. The goal: walking out looking rested in half an hour. But the skin under the eyes is very thin and can bruise easily. While this does not impair

the ultimate result, you should give yourself a "just in case" window of time should you develop a bruise.

*Gerald Imber, M.D., is a renowned plastic surgeon to the stars, an author, and a teacher. He heads a private clinic in New York City and is affiliated with the Weill-Cornell Medical College. Imber is cited by *Castle Connelly* and *USNEWS* as among the top 1 percent of plastic surgeons in the country. His philosophy, "The Youth Corridor," is defined as the period of life when you look your healthy, youthful best. His book, *The Youth Corridor*, can be purchased at amazon.com and is also available at Books for iPad including instructional videos.*

FILLERS
can help create
the appearance
of higher,
more defined
cheekbones.

9.5 million

Number of nonsurgical "lunchtime" procedures done in 2013

SOURCE: AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY