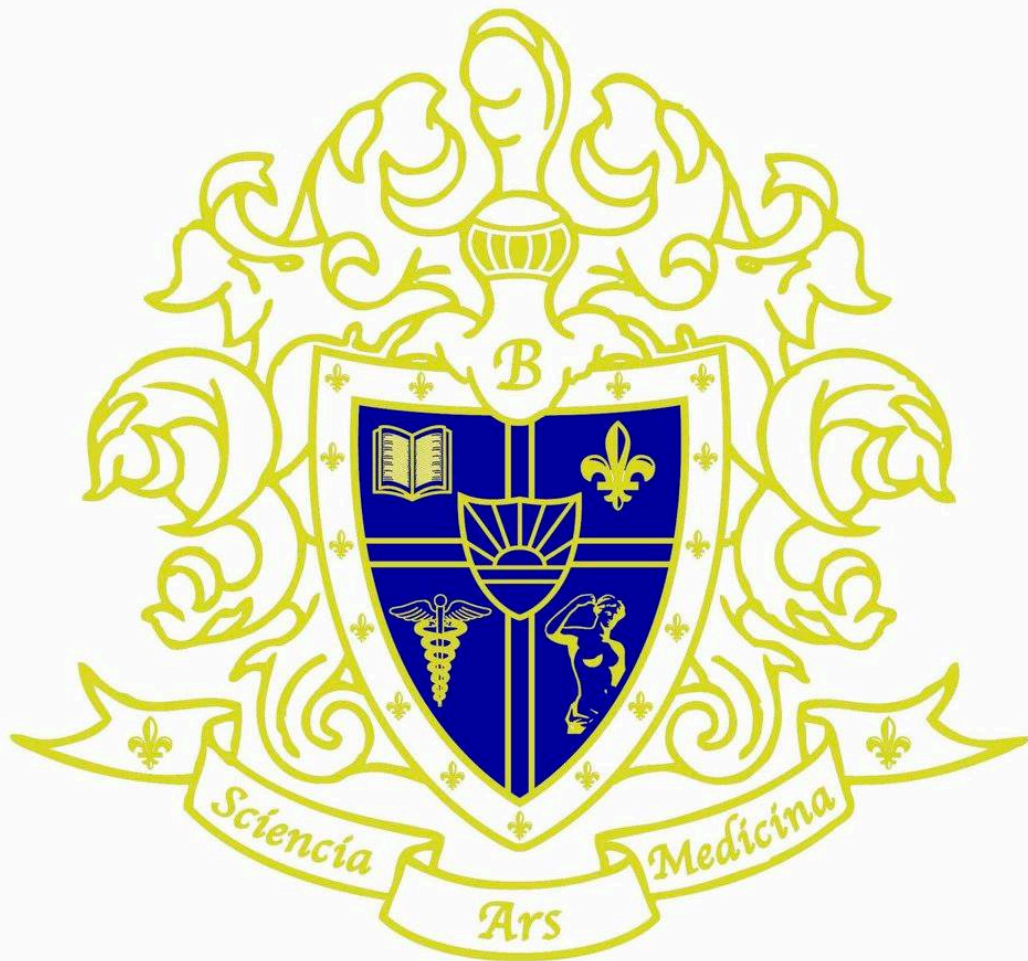


# **6 Key Factors In Cosmetic Surgery Decision Process**



**William H. Beeson, M.D.**

## 6 Key Factors In Cosmetic Surgery Decision Process

Cosmetic surgery can be one of the most life-changing and positive experiences over which you have control.

Although cosmetic surgery brings happiness to millions of people, your chances for success are much greater if you begin from the right emotional and psychological place. Recent studies have revealed that patients seeking cosmetic surgery typically have questions regarding the following six key factors. The following provides a brief outline of how we address these key issues and what differentiates us from other providers.



### 1. Fear of Anesthesia

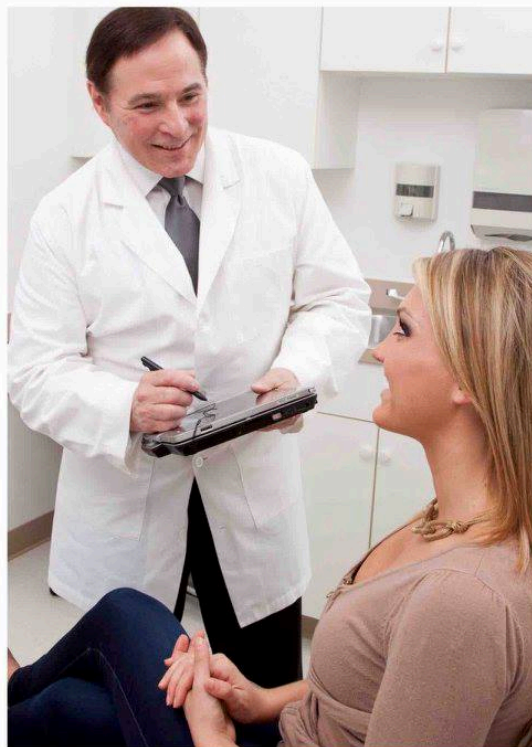
It is common for people be nervous about being “put to sleep” or having anesthesia. There had been many advances in recent years, which have markedly improved the “anesthesia experience” and make it very safe. There is always a potential risk with any surgical procedure or anesthetic. Fortunately, with facial surgery that is very rare, and you are probably more likely to be in a car accident going to the hospital than you are to have a major complication with surgery or anesthesia.



However, every surgical procedure, even one as simple as a tooth extraction, entails some degree of risk, both in terms of serious complications and the sense that the results may not match one's expectations. Although rare, some of the risks might include reactions to anesthetics or other medications.

We take a number of steps to further decrease this already low risk.

We perform a thorough evaluation of your medical history, do a physical exam, and obtain specific laboratory tests prior to you having surgery. The tests help to evaluate your liver and kidney function, since anesthetic medications are metabolized through your liver and kidneys. We also obtain tests to be sure there are no low-grade infections or blood clotting abnormalities, which could adversely affect your healing. In many cases we also obtain an EKG.



## **Medical Clearance**

With your approval, we contact your doctor to obtain any additional information regarding your medical history and to be sure that they do not see any medical contraindications to you undergoing anesthesia and surgery. We will also review with them any medications you are taking and determine if any changes or adjustments are needed before and after your procedure.

## **Anesthesiologist**

Your sedation will be by a board-certified anesthesiologist. Just as we are specialized in and limit our practice to facial plastic surgery, these physicians have done a 4-year residency in Anesthesiology and limit their practice to anesthesia. In addition, they have special expertise in anesthesia for outpatient surgery. During your procedure, you always have two doctors with you (myself and the anesthesiologist).



## **Our Staff**

Regardless where you have your surgery performed, we take our own nursing staff and our own instruments to be sure we have everything we need to provide you the best care and people who are familiar with you and your medical history. At your surgery you will see the same familiar faces that you have seen at our office.





## 2. Fear of “Unnatural” Results

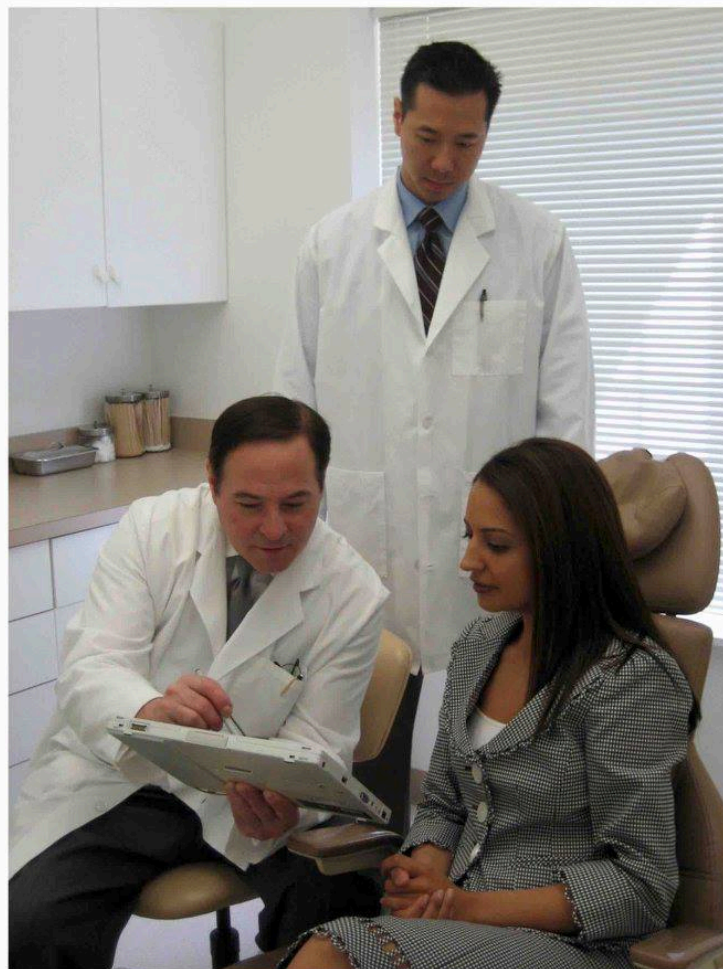


Our main goal is to obtain a natural-unoperated look. There are things we do to differentiate us from other doctors to obtain this goal. We want people to say that you look 10-15 years younger than your chronologic age. We don't want to change things; we just want to “move back the clock”. We restore your natural look by “repositioning” your tissues, like they were before. By restoring your normal anatomy and doing a “physiologic” surgery, we obtain a more natural look and one that ages normally.

The standard way that many physicians do facial surgery is to elevate and cut the muscles and then tighten and reposition the muscle in a new direction or “vector”. This can place nerves at risk to injury and cutting and repositioning the muscle changes the direction of the muscle pull and reduces its ability to function normally. For this reason, we choose to perform a more “physiologic” surgery. In this “physiologic” anatomic approach, we are simply repositioning the tissues to where they used to be.



A dense tissue called fascia covers the surface of the muscles. We are able to tighten this tissue in a way that maintains muscle function and allows the muscles over time to improve tone, since there is less pull or strain on the muscle. This avoids needing to raise the muscle and cut and reposition the muscle, which is a much quicker procedure, but changes the direction of the muscle and decreases the muscle function. Over time this technique can result in a “pulled” or “stretched” look, which is something we want to avoid!





### 3. Discomfort

Discomfort varies from person to person. However, there will always be some discomfort associated with surgery. While there is usually a relative minimum of pain and only minor incapacitation and discomfort following most cosmetic surgeries, one must expect that there will be some discomfort and realize that this is usually only temporary.

Fortunately, there are things we can do to minimize this discomfort. Most people find that a limited amount of prescription oral analgesic medication combined with over-the-counter analgesic medication is all that is needed for the first 3-5 days following surgery.



A twilight or general anesthesia is utilized for most procedures and results in essentially a painless experience for the patient. The anesthesiologist will use long-acting analgesics, which will help to reduce pain in the immediate recovery phase. We combined this with oral medications that are tailored to your specific body and medical history, which we start immediately after the procedure so that these medications can build up blood levels in your system before the post anesthesia medicine wears off.



In addition, we are able to use long-acting infiltration anesthetics, which provide local anesthetic effects for several days after the procedure. We can also use lasers and other techniques to help seal nerve endings, which helps to reduce discomfort and minimize swelling and bruising. Special dressings are used to help reduce swelling along with ice compresses for the first 36-48 hours, which significantly reduces discomfort.

In special needs cases we will work with pain medicine specialists who are also anesthesiologist to manage your pain medications during and after surgery. Thus, based upon your medical history and prior experience, we work with the anesthesiologist and your doctors to tailor a special regimen to optimally manage your medications during and after surgery to minimize discomfort.





## 4. Worry About Scars

All wounds healed by scar formation. This is a normal healing process for all incisions. In plastic and cosmetic surgery, we do extra things to camouflage the incisions and hide them in the normal wrinkle lines and contours of the body. However, it is important to realize you are trading a “shape up” for a small “scar”. However, there are a number of things that we do to differentiate us from other surgeons and help us obtain the best results we can.

Layered closure- the more tension or pull there is on the skin edges, the wider the scar will be. To minimize this tension, instead of using one-layer sutures like many surgeons do, we closed our incisions in 3 layers. This markedly reduces the skin tension and helps to minimize the amount of scar tissue. In addition, we frequently will use tape to support the incisions. The special dressings and ice compresses are used to help reduce the swelling, which further decreases tension.

The healing process can take 12-18 months to obtain the final results, While most people look great and resume normal social activities within the first 1-2 weeks after their procedure, we follow you until your healing process is complete. During that time, we prescribe special topical creams and ointments and at times, special laser treatments to promote healing and to help us obtain the best results possible. In addition, as noted previously, we hide the incisions in body contours and skin creases to further “camouflage” the incisions.

We feel that being very aggressive in our post-surgery wound care helps us obtain much improved results. However, if after the healing process is complete, additional improvement is needed, scar revisions can be performed.



## 5. When Can I Get Back to Work: Recovery Time



Swelling and bruising can vary from person to person based upon their skin type, medical history and how they care for themselves following surgery. Thus, recovery time is individual. However, on average most patients having facial surgery find that they can resume normal social and work activities within 7-10 days.

It takes 12-18 months to obtain your final result. However, customarily after 7-10 days the swelling and bruising are down to the point that most people can use little or no makeup to camouflage any bruising and return to work and other social activities. However, over the next several weeks the swelling will continue to resolve, and numbness and tightness continue to subside. During this time, if needed, our staff can help with various makeup camouflaging techniques to facilitate resuming your normal social activities.



There are a number of things that we feel are very important in expediting your recovery and return to normal social and work activities. Swelling and bruising can be markedly reduced by stopping all aspirin containing compounds 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after surgery.

In addition, we recommend that individuals stop taking vitamins and herbs that start with the letter “G”- garlic, ginseng, ginkgo- as they can reduce the platelets from clotting effectively and result in more bruising.

It is also important during the post operative recovery to maintain ice compresses for 36-48 hours after surgery and to avoid any heavy lifting or straining. For this reason, it is important to be sure that you have support at home from family and friends. If necessary, our office can arrange for a nursing service to provide you support care for the first 1-3 days following surgery.





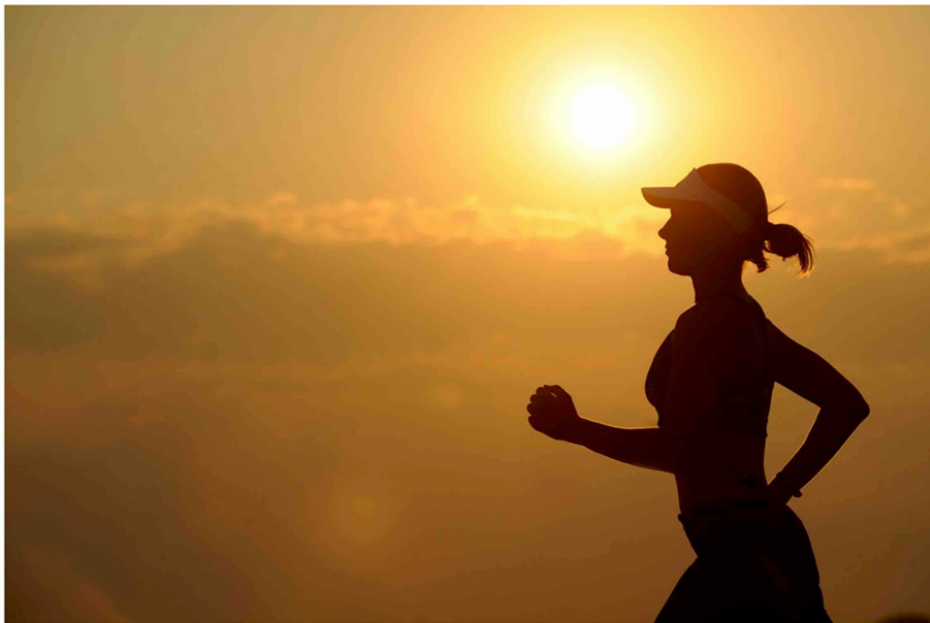
## **Post Op Instructions**

Sleep with head elevated 30-40 degrees for two weeks

Apply cold compresses over neck and cheek areas every 10 minutes for 48 hours following surgery

No heavy lifting or straining over 5 pounds for 7-10 days after surgery

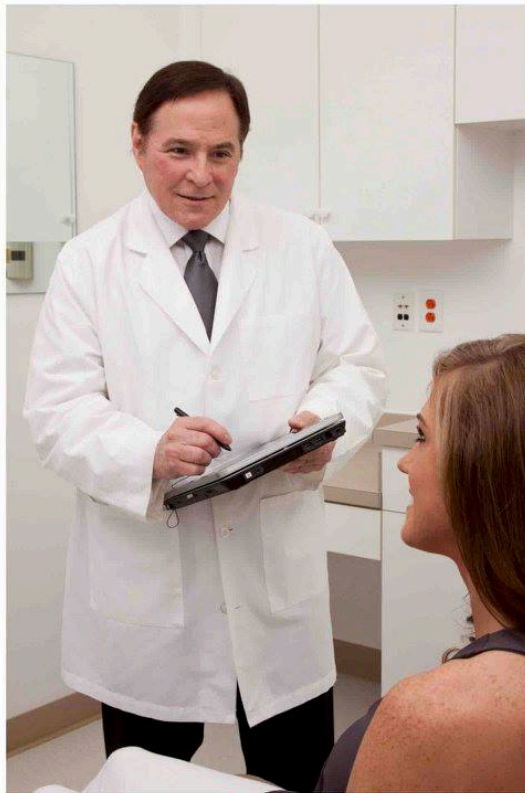
Soft or liquid diet for 5-7 days following surgery





Patients ask about taking various herbs and medications such as Arnica to help reduce swelling and bruising. A number of studies have been performed regarding the use of Arnica, but results are inconclusive. In fact, some studies feel that Arnica may actually result in more bruising and swelling. For that reason, we do not recommend taking Arnica before or after surgery.

With recovery, the old saying “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” could not be more true. Keeping your activity reduced for the first several days after surgery; avoiding any heavy lifting or straining; and maintaining ice compresses is critically important in reducing bruising and accelerating your healing process. We have found that swelling is most 3-5 days after surgery and then markedly decreases, such that most individuals are able to resume activities at 7-10 days following the procedure.



## 6. Cost

Finances are important to everyone. That is why immediately after the consultation our staff will provide you with a detailed price quote regarding the procedure(s) you desire. Our professional fees are based upon our experience and expertise and reflect the complexity of the procedure(s) desired. We take pride in providing personalized care and extensive follow up after your surgery. Patients receive my home and personal cell phone numbers to call at any time if they have questions or concerns.

I do all of my own surgeries. There are no assistants or fellows who do one side and I do the other side. That is the reason procedures take the times they do.

In life, it has been my experience that we usually get what we pay for. The “price” may be less, but the overall “cost” is actually more if one does not obtain the desired results or the longevity desired. In every procedure we do, we strive to provide our patients with the best value and the best result we possibly can.

Finances are very personal and confidential. Our staff is happy to work with you on a personal basis to develop a payment plan that works for your budget.

It is not uncommon for patients to desire to have multiple procedures performed at one setting in order to minimize overall cost and to minimize “downtime”.