

## ■ POINT OF VIEW

# Forever Young

By Carol Martin

It was a typical social night at one of Atlanta's upscale French restaurants – diners at the tables and a throng packed into the bar and spilling onto the veranda. As I squeezed sideways through the crowd, I couldn't help but check out the faces and bodies and how I would remodel each one: a face lift here, implants there, lipo all around...

Then a voice in the crowd: "Carol!" It was an old friend who'd known me since I'd modeled full time in my mid-20s, the former manager of Saks 5th Avenue. He'd since retired, but still had a fatherly tone that I remembered from the runway days. "My dear," he sighed, "I have gray hair, but you haven't changed a bit."

Beyond exercise and diet, I espouse better living through cosmetic surgery, and told him I'd had a number of things done. He shook his head in disbelief – you see, I don't look like I've ever been under the knife. And to me, that's the key: looking like you haven't aged without telltale signs of cosmetic work.

In surgery, as in life, timing is everything. And the trick to looking much the same as you did yesterday is to nip, tuck and tighten BEFORE you really need it. That way, changes you make to your face and body are gradual and inconspicuous.

## Keys to staying young

Looking young also depends on the following: keeping hair and makeup updated, brightening your smile with cosmetic dentistry, dressing in clothes that are flattering on you, and modern, without being trendy (there's nothing worse than a 50-year-old trying to be Britney Spears!), regular exercise and a balanced diet.

Everyone ages differently. Genetics and lifestyle each play a role. The ugly truth is we do age eventually. But there are some tips I can offer from experience (my own and that of hundreds of clients) about how to stay looking younger, longer.

## Nip (and tuck) it in the bud

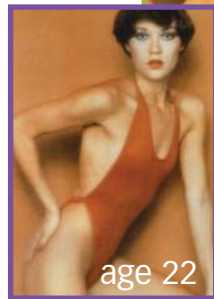
My fundamental advice is to start early. I arrested signs of aging as they surfaced, not waiting until I had clearly aged and then having to undergo a radical transformation. This is exactly why everyone thinks I haven't changed, and no one would guess I've had 10 procedures.

In my 20s, I had my nose done. That has nothing to do with aging, but it was my first cosmetic procedure. Thrilled with the results, I was hooked! Later in my 20s, I got breast implants. This has remained my single favorite outcome over the years and, in fact, it helped me feel

more grown up! As I age, however, the implants offer the advantage of not sagging the way natural breast tissue can. Then, despite regular exercise, the little bulge below my belly button would not go away. I got fed up and had lipo and, "poof," it was gone! In my 30s, I got rid of droopy skin on my upper lids and puffiness under my eyes with an upper and lower blepharoplasty.

Around 40, my body started its genetically programmed changes. I fought back with liposuction of my upper abdomen and hips, regaining a flatter tummy and trimmer hips. Then, I had a facelift to counteract effects of gravity like a saggy jaw line, jowliness and loose neck skin. Later, I had a light chemical peel to decrease some dark patches on my face. In my mid 40s, I suddenly looked like I was five months pregnant! I had a radical abdominoplasty to put everything back in its place.

When I'm in my 50s, I plan on starting all over! It's important to remember that cosmetic surgery doesn't prevent aging – neither does anything else, for that matter. But, along with taking care of yourself, cosmetic procedures are a great way to slow down the clock!



## In your 20s

Avoid too much sun; apply sunscreen or sunblock to your face daily  
Clean and moisturize your face daily and use an exfoliant regularly  
Consider a lower eye job (lower blepharoplasty) if there are bags under your eyes  
If you have stubborn bulges that exercise won't burn off, and your weight is otherwise stable, you can have liposuction to remove the fat.

## In your 30s

Everything mentioned for the 20's applies, plus:  
Begin taking antioxidants  
Exfoliate with Retin-A or Renova (trademarks for the medicine tretinoin)  
For lines and creases around your eyes and mouth (like the nasal-labial folds, lines that run from the side of the nose to the mouth), injectables such as collagen or autologous fat (from elsewhere in your body) work well  
Puffiness and creases around the eyes may call for an eye job (upper and lower blepharoplasty) to restore that wide-awake look  
A brow lift can open up the eyes and remove forehead wrinkles  
Botox injections paralyze muscles that create wrinkles (forehead, for example)  
Breast implants can provide volume if breasts are small or beginning to sag

## In your 40s

Anything mentioned for the 20s and 30s, plus:  
Time for your first facelift!  
As lips thin with age, lip augmentation (injection) can make them fuller  
After completing childbearing, consider breast lift and/or augmentation, and a tummy tuck

## In your 50s

If you started having surgery earlier in life, it's not uncommon to repeat procedures, depending on how you've aged  
If considering first-time surgery on your face, I suggest you do everything at once (facelift, brow lift, eyes) – if you do only part, it will look half-done –like a partially redecorated room  
If considering liposuction, realize the elasticity in your skin has diminished and you may end up with loose skin