



When it comes down to it, the same things hold true for men as women: Young is better than old, thin is better than flabby. Single, married, divorced — we all want to look good.

## man in the making

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### Plastic surgery is one of the last domains

almost universally believed to fall well inside female territory. “Men are pretty simple. I think we have one neuron and one chromosome,” says Dr. John A. Millard, founder of the Advanced Body Sculpting Institute in Lone Tree. “We want the same thing at 20 that we want at 60: to look sexy and to feel young. We want to look muscular.”

He’s not the only one who thinks so. Plastic surgeons see the evidence every day: Women are twice as likely as men to be interested in cosmetic surgery, yet there is a much bigger gap in the actual follow-through. According to Millard, only one-eighth as many men go through with it.

However, the gap may be closing. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), men now seek 233,000 cosmetic surgeries and 900,000 minimally invasive procedures annually, accounting for one of every 10 enhancements, though there are differences in what they want to change and how they go about it. As simple as we may be, our emphasis changes over time. Instead of a lifelong concern with one’s appearance, men’s evolving relationship with youth tends to come as crises.

### THE AWKWARD YEARS

In our teens, our imperfections tend to make us an object of ridicule, making the already awkward years even more so. For example,

gynecomastia (common term: “man boobs”) is not the sort of thing schoolmates can refrain from taunting. Because in adolescents the phenomenon is generally not related to obesity, diet and exercise won’t solve the problem. As a result, breast reduction surgery is the fourth most popular male procedure, according to the ASPS.

Acne treatment accounts for a large percentage of Shawn Lynn Haviland’s younger male clients. Haviland is a licensed medical aesthetician at Denver’s Park Avenue Medical Aesthetics who continues to work with Dr. James Fulton, one of the codvelopers of Retin-A. Once acne has cleared up, there are a number of treatments she can do to remove the residual scarring.

An abundance of hormones and energy combined with a lack of awareness of one’s mortality also tend to leave other scars, the repair of which does not fall into the category of elective procedures. Once these young men have seen the results, however, they may be more likely to come back later in life for procedures such as a nose job or to remove some fat beneath the chin.

### QUARTER-LIFE

For some men, the quarter-life crisis can be worse than midlife because it marks the end of the decade when he realizes he isn’t in high school any more.

“In their 30s, men start getting more concerned with their looks,” says Kimberly Hall of Refresh Laser Spa in South Denver. “They haven’t been taking care of their skin, and at 35, they wake up and say, oh my gosh, I laid out in the sun my whole life!”

Hall specializes in Affirm CO<sub>2</sub> Microablative Laser Skin Resurfacing, which she calls the Rolls Royce of skin treatment. Because of the high altitude, Coloradans are more prone to sunspots and premature aging, which the CO<sub>2</sub> laser can help without the downtime of other techniques such as facelifts.

In this stage, men also tend to do a lot of hair removal from the back, neck, ears ... even the nether regions (as yet, there doesn’t appear to be a laser that can get inside the nostril).

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Because the laser works on pigment, Hall says you want to get rid of it before you go gray.

As the inevitability of maturity sets in, our metabolism changes, and we start to put on weight. Only now men are doing something about it: The ASPS says, between 1992 and 1998, male liposuctions quadrupled from 5,000 to 20,000, reaching 32,000 in 2007.

Today, more than 60 percent of Millard’s patients are men, in large part due to his Vaser Hi Def LipoSculpture procedure. The technique selectively removes fat deposits around specific muscle groups, so the contours are visible. “Believe it or not, we all have pretty good muscle definition,” he says. “The fat just prevents us from seeing it.”

It’s far from an alternative to exercise and eating right. Millard says most of the people he sees are actually quite fit; cosmetic surgery is not the answer for those who are morbidly obese. His patients are often fanatical about fitness and frustrated they don’t get the results they want from their workouts. “People asked what would make men start doing plastic surgery,” Millard says. “Well, this may be it.”

### MIDLIFE

This is the peak period for cosmetic enhancements because of the prevalence of divorces and younger girlfriends men fear losing to some guy at a frat party. (Not that you don’t see couples getting his-and-her improvements.)

However, there’s another reason men want to look younger at this period in their lives. In a down economy, they can find themselves unemployed or competing with younger men for jobs and promotions.

By now, the hairline of an unlucky few has started migrating, and we have to choose between the Kojak and the Howard Cosell — or we come home with a set of hair plugs to go

with that cherry red convertible. “We just started treating alopecia (male baldness),” Haviland says. Not surprisingly, men take this category, accounting for 76 percent of all hair transplants.

You’ll also start noticing a few more colleagues in your age group getting tummy tucks, and many places specialize in this procedure. Because we keep the same number of fat cells throughout our lives — cells enlarge rather than multiply when we gain weight — the fat cells we take out surgically are gone forever. But what’s left can still get bigger, which is why Millard’s facility offers personal trainers, yoga, and other activities for his patients.

### THE GOLDEN FEARS

This is the time we make up for any recklessness in our twenties. Our younger trophy wife didn’t work out, and despite our best efforts, the first refuses to take us back. Around this time, we start seeking to reclaim the companionship we gave up for wife number two in wife number three. The economic reasons remain as well. When your IRA drops 45 percent, you may be working much longer than planned.

Haviland also says a lot of the men she sees in this category are happily married, accompany their wives on a procedure, and like the results. While women tend to want peels and resurfacing, Haviland says, “men tend to be more concerned with the tightness of their skin.” You start to see a lot more botox injections, neck lipo, and removal of wrinkles around the eyelids.

Ten percent of facelifts and a quarter of nose jobs are now performed on the plainer sex. Haviland says she sees a lot more people in this age group looking to remove age spots or fix broken capillaries.

Men want to look good. And these days, more are willing to pay for it. ☐