

# AGE-OLD BATTLE

## New nonsurgical procedures can slow down the march of Father Time

By Maria Sonnenberg

**B**arbara Acree has a new face and neck, and she can thank her recalcitrant air conditioner for not having to undergo a traditional face-lift to get it.

The Melbourne resident, no stranger to Botox and dermal fillers, had reached a stage when she was seriously considering going under the knife for a face-lift.

“Then the AC went out and the money went there,” Acree said.

As it turns out, Acree’s air conditioning unit was doing her favor, since it got her to explore other alternatives.

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the average face-lift will set you back more than \$8,000, and that is not counting the cost of anesthesia, operating room facilities and related expenses. Because a face-lift also comes with significant bruising and swelling, Acree would have been out of commission for as long as three weeks until things got back to normal, particularly since she suffers from thin skin prone to bruising.

There is also the risk inherent in general anesthesia, plus possible complications such as injury to facial nerves, risk of infection and possible scarring.

### SAFE ALTERNATIVES

Searching for options other than a



CLEVENS FACE AND BODY SPECIALISTS

Dr. Phillip Barbee discusses with a patient how a nonsurgical face-lift can provide desired results.

face-lift, Acree discovered nonsurgical neck and face-lifts, which approximate, and in some instances surpass, surgical results without surgery.

“It’s a safe alternative to a traditional surgical face-lift, without the anesthesia, scarring or downtime,” said Dr. Emran Imami of Imami Skin and Cosmetic Center in Melbourne.

To achieve results, Imami concocts a cocktail of three different treatment techniques: FaceTite, Morpheus 8 and MyEllevate.

FaceTite, also known as radiofrequency

assisted liposuction, or RFAL, melts fat, stimulates collagen production and tightens and firms skin. It is particularly beneficial in the lower face area, where sagging can occur because of aging or weight loss.

The procedure contours the face while tightening the skin by delivering radiofrequency energy both above and below the skin and tissue. The improvement to appearance makes it a good contender for a traditional face-lift.

Morpheus 8 also uses radiofrequency energy, but for microneedling to penetrate deep into the skin to remodel and con- >>



Dr. Emran Imami uses a cocktail of three different treatment techniques to achieve a face-lift without surgery.



IMAMI SKIN AND COSMETIC CENTER PHOTOS

The Imami Skin and Cosmetic Center team examines Barbara Acree's face to develop a plan of action for a non-surgical face-lift. This procedure will have a much-lessened recovery period.

tour, giving a smoother, sleeker appearance. It stimulates the production of collagen, the protein that forms a scaffold to strengthen and structure the body. As the body ages, collagen levels fall, contributing to skin aging. Microneedling serves to incite collagen.

Traditional microneedling uses tiny needles that pierce the skin that the body heals by creating new collagen. Morpheus 8 also adds an extra punch with radiofrequency-generated heat to tighten and contour the underlying fat. In lower settings, it improves texture for a more youthful look and at its most powerful settings, it even sculpts the fat under the skin.

MyEllevate uses fine, braided silk suture suspension threads to gently lift the neck, eliminate “neck bands” and sharpen jawline.

“We are now extremely effective in creating a sharp, youthful, well-defined neck and jawline by re-suspending with MyEllevate,” Imami added.

“The lift requires no incisions, but usually creates results not achievable with traditional surgery.”

### SUCCESSFUL COMBINATION

Nonsurgical face-lifts usually depend on a variety of modalities to achieve results.

“We use a combination of lasers, radiofrequency and specially designed suspension suture placed beneath the surface of the skin,” said Dr. Phillip Barbee, a facial plastic surgeon with Clevens Face and Body Specialists in Melbourne.

“This combination allows us to reduce fat, tighten muscles and tighten skin all

without the use of any incisions.”

At Clevens Face and Body Specialists, Barbee and the team rely on Express Lift and Express Lift Plus, plus the minimally invasive Laser-Assisted Weekend Neck Lift to produce optimal results. In one treatment, Express Lift tightens saggy skin, corrects jowls and double chins, smooths and tightens the skin around the eyes, temples and brows and improves smile lines and nasolabial folds. >>



Thanks to a broken air conditioner, Melbourne resident Barbara Acree opted for a nonsurgical face-lift. Acree is delighted with the results, seen in these before and after images.



Imami prepares a patient for a nonsurgical face-lift in his Melbourne office.

IMAMI SKIN AND COSMETIC CENTER

Although the ideal age range encompasses 30- to 50-year-olds, the procedure is helpful at any age.

“We will see patients a bit younger and some beyond the age range,” Dr. Ross Clevens said. “The art lies in the combination of techniques to achieve the desired result for each patient. This requires both the skill and experience of the facial plastic surgeon and having the proper set of tools and technology within the practice.”

#### IDEAL PATIENT

An ideal patient, according to Clevens, will have skin laxity and unwanted fat deposition, but only early banding or weakness of the platysma muscles of the neck.

“Once there is significant neck banding and platysmal laxity, the patient is typically a better candidate for a procedure such as the deep plane face-lift,” he explained.

A deep plane face-lift, considered the gold standard for treating

unwanted jowls, loose neck and neck bands, is a surgical procedure and does involve downtime.

With a neck-lift, on the other hand, the patient takes a weekend off before being back in action. The procedure, performed under local anesthesia with sedation, involves a tiny incision hidden in the natural fold of the chin. Laser energy, liposuction and sometimes a chin implant improves the appearance of sagging face, jowls and neck.

Patients can typically resume normal activities in a couple of days.

Bruising is minimized with the use of a platelet healing gel that contains stem cells, growth factors and healing cells harvested from the patient’s own blood.

#### LASTING RESULTS

With nonsurgical face-lifts, patients can see a positive change almost overnight, although improvement continues for up to six months afterward. Results can last up to 10 years. >>



CLEVENS FACE AND BODY SPECIALISTS

Dr. Ross Clevens says while the ideal ages for non-surgical face-lifts is 30 to 50, it has benefits at any age.



CLEVENS FACE AND BODY SPECIALISTS PHOTOS  
Plastic surgeon Barbee uses Express Lift and Express Lift Plus, plus the minimally invasive Laser-Assisted Weekend Neck Lift, to produce optimal results with nonsurgical face-lifts.



Nonsurgical face-lifts can achieve dramatic results, as seen in these before and after photos of a patient at Clevens Face and Body Specialists in Melbourne.

While nonsurgical face-lifts will bestow a fresher, more youthful look, they do not work miracles and patients should also have realistic expectations of results. At the moment, no procedure can replace a 70-year-old’s face with that of a 20-year-old, but it can knock off a good decade of the wear and tear caused by aging.

“With surgical face-lifts, patients may look 10 years younger, whereas with

nonsurgical face-lifts, patients can easily look five to 10 years younger,” Imami said.

Improvements are enhanced with a cosmetic maintenance regimen that includes Botox, fillers, laser treatments, PRP treatments and medical-grade skin care.

“Irrespective of age, patients will experience marked improvement,” Imami said. ♣