

LOCAL HEALTH TALK

Contour Threading Face Lift

The “holy grail” of cosmetic dermatologic surgery has always been to tighten and lift aging facial skin without cutting, sutures, pain, recovery, scars or risk. The elusive “no downtime face lift”, although many unscrupulous physicians have advertised its existence, has heretofore not been achieved. Dermatologists expert in laser surgery have become very proficient in improving the quality of aged and sun damaged skin. Wrinkles can be dramatically reduced with lasers as well as Botox and Restylane injections. The many other cutaneous stigmata of aging such as liver spots, sunspots, redness, spider veins, enlarged oil glands, and poor skin texture are easily and commonly removed with modern laser technology and dermatologic expertise.

The first step towards nonsurgical skin tightening occurred in the mid 90’s with the advent of laser resurfacing. This invasive laser procedure proved excellent at tightening loose and wrinkled skin but was certainly not without recovery or downtime. Ten to fourteen days of wound healing and three months of facial redness was the price to pay for the excellent results this procedure achieved.

The next step occurred several years ago with a truly no downtime, minimally invasive procedure called Thermage. Thermage uses radiofrequency electrical current to heat the deeper layers of the skin and stimulate skin contraction and tightening. With Thermage there are no wounds, recovery, or downtime. However, results range from impressive to subtle and it can be hard to predict who will have the best results.

The newest and most exciting breakthrough towards a nonsurgical face lift is the Contour ThreadLift™. This procedure is performed under local anesthesia only. General anesthesia or sedation is not necessary. There are essentially no incisions, no sutures, and no scars. The procedure is performed simply with needles and threads. Needles enter the skin through the



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scalp and are used to implant a small thread into the deeper layers of the skin and subcutaneous fat. The FDA approved, patented thread technology utilizes very small barbs which allow the thread to easily move through the skin in one direction. If pulled in the opposite direction, the barbs grab the tissue and open in an umbrella-like fashion. This creates a support structure that allows trouble spots to be gently lifted and supported. After loose, drooping tissue has been lifted and supported, the suture is affixed deep under the scalp. This procedure

allows for relatively dramatic lifting of cheeks, jowls, brows, and neck. The results of threadlifting are reliable, reproducible, and relatively dramatic.

The results of a Contour ThreadLift™ are significantly better and more consistent than Thermage, however the procedure is more invasive. There is post-operative swelling and bruising which can cause some “downtime”. There is typically minimal post-operative pain. A Contour ThreadLift™ can be used to support a previously done face lift that has begun to droop. The Contour ThreadLift™ can also be combined with other proven dermatologic procedures such as liposculpture of the neck and jowls, laser wrinkle removal, laser facial rejuvenation, Botox and fillers.

Does the Contour ThreadLift™ represent the minimally invasive skin lifting and tightening procedure dermatologists have been searching for? It certainly appears to be a major advancement in our anti-aging armamentarium.