

Moultrie News

Section B



Smile of the Week

"I'm smiling because Jesus is the reason for the season."

-Wayne Cassaday

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Plastic surgery for the body An interview with East Cooper surgeon Richard Kline

(Editor's Note: This is the third of a four-part series on plastic surgery east of the Cooper.)

BY BRIGITTE SURETTE
SPECIAL TO THE MOULTRIE NEWS

Lipo, tummy tuck, boob job . . . terms well known in our culture today and tossed around easily in conversations. Most of us know someone who has had some kind of cosmetic procedure, some of us have had procedures ourselves and still many of us are seriously considering it. Every week, programs such as Extreme Makeover show us how getting rid of physical flaws transforms lives. Are we being lulled into thinking that a lift here, a tuck there is as easy as getting a new hairdo or losing 10 pounds?

Americans spent \$6.5 billion on cosmetic surgical procedures last year. Liposuction was the number one surgical procedure, with breast augmentation a close second. Women account for the overwhelming majority of body-contouring procedures. With lipo and tummy tucks giving moms their pre-baby bodies

back, 35-50 year women no longer have to settle for bodies like their mother had after children. They want to look better longer.

Seeking the ideal form is nothing new, especially for women. Until the 20th century, women endured corsets that constricted their breathing and actually squeezed their internal organs - all for sake of an hourglass figure.

In truth, body contouring is nothing new; only the ways in which we're achieving it are. Has modern medicine offered us better ways in which to attain the perfect body? What are the most popular body contouring procedures? What about the risks and complications? I interviewed Dr. Richard Kline of East Cooper Plastic Surgery to find out.

The Surgeon

Dr. Richard Kline, a Charleston native, attended MUSC to obtain his medical degree, completing his general surgery internship in 1985.

"Like many Charlestonians, I went off to the big city to get educated," he said with a

laugh. Kline's surgical background is indeed impressive. He was at the prestigious Cleveland Clinic in Ohio from 85-89 for his general surgery residency; he did his plastic surgery residency at Louisiana State; and he spent a year at the University of Miami for a year of craniofacial surgery.

"After being away from Charleston for 11 years, I came back in 1996 to MUSC and was the first full-time craniofacial surgeon in the area," said Kline. Kline applied his expertise to reconstructive surgery while at MUSC, then decided to open East Cooper Plastic Surgery in January of 2000.

"At East Cooper Plastic Surgery, my colleague, Dr. Craigie and I have a mission: to make our patients happy. From the moment they contact our office, we want to answer all their questions, be reassuring and positive," Kline stated.

Dr. Kline still works in the field of reconstructive surgery, but said that he finds plastic surgery challenging and gratifying.

"I found that when I rotated through plastic surgery during my residency at the Cleveland Clinic, forms and shapes (facial and body contouring procedures) were fascinating. It wasn't until January of my chief resident year of general surgery that I said I'm going to be a plastic surgeon."

East Cooper Plastic Surgery specializes in both facial and body plastic surgery and has over 13,000 before-and-after pictures of past patients that illustrate their experience and expertise.

Kline stated that in his practice, the top three procedures for plastic surgery of the body are liposuction, breast augmentation and abdominoplasty (tummy tuck). "The majority of my patients are overwhelmingly female for cosmetic surgery," Kline confirmed. The average age for plastic surgery for the body varies greatly, depending on the surgery, anywhere from early 20s to 60.

Liposuction

"The ideal patient for lipo is a woman who has not had children so that she doesn't have a lot of stretched, extra skin; near her ideal body weight, in good health and has some of those gender specific problems such as saddlebags or a little



The tummy tuck patient also had a little liposuction a few months after the tummy tuck. She also has an unusually good result. Most patients should not expect quite this much improvement.

bit of tummy or hips," said Kline.

Dr. Kline uses the tumescent technique for liposuction invented by two dermatologists in 1985. "A very, very dilute solution of drugs that contain an infusion of saline, adrenaline and anesthetic is injected into the area," Kline said.

The drugs act as a local anesthetic and some patients may not require general anesthesia. An incision is made and fat is sucked or suctioned using a wand like device or syringe known as a cannula. These areas are marked prior to surgery and provide a topical map for the surgeon.

"The tumescent technique brought blood loss down considerably compared to previous methods," said Kline. "It's (tumescent) made it a procedure that can be done without general anesthesia, but it's hard to predict which patients will tolerate the procedure without it. Some patients may have a more dense connective tissue in their fat and that may prevent the local anesthesia from diffusing through the tissue. We usually insist men have anesthesia because they don't tolerate pain as well as women."

Kline stated that the sensational stories we see about serious complications in liposuction are most likely high-volume lipo in which surgeons take more than 4-5 liters of aspirate (fat and fluids) and are done in an outpatient setting with no access to ambula-



tory or a hospital environment. Although higher volume lip suction can be done safely under the right circumstances Kline chooses to do lower volume. "I choose not to do high-volume lipo because it has to be done in a hospital setting or an ambulatory surgery center where the patient stays overnight. Our lipo procedures are performed here in our center and we are JCAHO certified. We have a formal agreement with the hospital to transfer a patient in case of a complication that may need that kind of environment."

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, or JCAHO, is considered the "Gold Standard" in health care and means an outpatient facility has met stringent standards evaluated by healthcare professionals.

Kline stated, "I always err on the side of taking too little as opposed to taking too much. Instead of viewing that as a problem, I just incorporate that as part of the procedure. I tell my patients that there's about a one-in-three chance

See Lipo, page 4B



The liposuction was of the abdomen, arms, and inner thighs. A total of 5 liters of aspirate was removed, which is the maximum that can be done as an outpatient.



On Vacation With The Moultrie News

The Infante family took a summer vacation to the Grand Canyon. Pictured here are Andy, Dawn, Anderson, Jonathan, Allison and Chris.

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