

Patients: Women reveal details about plastic surgery experience

Continued from page 1A

Hegler: "It's a cruel world out there, and I do think people judge you by the way you look. Maybe my weight had something to do with it also, but I can walk in a room now and people notice me. It's given me confidence that I've never had and because of it, I feel as if I'm living up to my own expectations and taking chances that I may not have taken otherwise."

Adams: "It's a shallow universe and these are not my values, but the reality is people judge you on how you look and I think it's worse for women. People do treat me differently. Whether it's because of my looks or because I have more confidence since I feel better about myself, that's been my experience."

Satisfied customers

Three of the women interviewed chose Dr. Thomas Funcik of Coastal Facial Plastic Surgery for their surgeon. Hegler was referred to Dr. Funcik by the dentist that performed her reconstructive dental work. I asked them about their experience with Dr. Funcik and his staff.

Nichols: "They were phenomenal. He's not just a great doctor, he's a good human being. He is an artist at what he does and he won't take

chances. If you're not a good candidate, he'll sit down and discuss that with you."

Meissner: "It's his gift. It's what he was meant to do. You can watch him and realize how happy it makes him, to make others happy and change their life the way he does. A good surgeon won't do surgery for the wrong reasons."

Hegler: Laughing, "I have kind of a crush on him. He's as good as gold. Even the day of my surgery right before going in he said to me, Debi, if you want to change your mind, let me know. This is your decision, and I want you to be comfortable with that. He's very supportive."

Adams: "I know doctors, and I knew what I was looking for. When I met Dr. Funcik, I knew instinctively he was the right surgeon for me. I don't think we realize what we have here in South Carolina because clinically and surgically, he's a perfectionist. He looks at a patient, not just from a surgeon's point of view but from the view of what's going to look right for that person. He doesn't overdo it. He enhanced all the things that were already me and took away the negative things that were happening."

Some of the women interviewed consulted with other surgeons before deciding to go

with Dr. Funcik. They all stated the importance of being comfortable with your surgeon of choice.

What women want

Whether you agree or disagree with the idea of plastic surgery, it's a personal choice. Since women make up 80 percent of plastic cosmetic surgery and procedures performed, they obviously want to be the best they can be, not only in terms of the way others see or view them, but the way in which they view themselves. When asked what advice they would give to other women who may be considering giving up the creams and taking the next step, here's what they had to say.

Nichols: "I'd recommend it (surgery) to anyone that wants to look more youthful. My experience has been wonderful, and I would most definitely do it again!"

Meissner: "Go for it! The only reason why I did this interview is to let women know that it's (surgery) nothing to be ashamed of and I think we should work on ourselves continually; spiritually, physically, and intellectually. The physical side of me, whether its considered good or bad, affects me as a human being. How I look is an important part of how I feel about myself, and that's nothing to



Susan Meissner is pictured here before and after her surgery.

be ashamed of. It's a lot more expensive to buy a new car and people do that to look good to others, so what's the difference?"

Hegler: "Don't look in the mirror the first day home from surgery! Plastic surgery is a big deal. The most important thing is that you do your research and get the right doctor. Do it; my life has changed in a very positive way."

Adams: "When you have something about your looks that you don't like, you become self-centered in a sense

because it bothers you and you're thinking about yourself. When you release that, you're free to project outwards with confidence. People may think cosmetic surgery is shallow, but if you flip that around and decide for yourself, I want to take care of things that are bothering me, you're not obsessed about 'me' any more, and you're able to focus more on others. I don't worry about 'me' any more. I feel great about myself."

Next week: Plastic Surgery for the Body - An interview

with Dr. Richard Kline, an East Cooper surgeon.

(Editor's note: The views expressed in this article are not necessarily the views of the Moultrie News or the author and are not intended as medical advice. Anyone considering any type of medical procedure or surgery should consult with their surgeon of choice.)

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