

## The Cost of Beauty

By Don J. Fontana, MD

The saying, "beauty is only skin deep" is no longer used in the office of the cosmetic plastic surgeon of today. In years past, plastic surgeons were limited to addressing facial skin laxity. Face lifts and eyelid surgery were procedures limited to the wealthy. Today, plastic surgeons offer both young and older patients a large variety of non-invasive treatments that can refresh and reinvigorate the face.

One of the first signs of aging in patients with fair complexions is wrinkling and furrows about the eyes. These crows' feet become progressively deeper with age, sun exposure and the beginning of menopause. They are a result of thinning skin and muscle activity. Botox is the logical treatment for this condition and provides an excellent improvement by reducing the severity of muscle contraction. The treatment is almost painless and very effective in reducing these early signs of aging. Botox treatment is recommended for the deep frown lines between the eyebrows, as well as deep creases of the forehead.

The cost is reasonable and the results are very impressive when administered by a fully trained, competent plastic surgeon.

If a patient exhibits deep folds or creases of the face, facial fillers are used. Fillers are employed when a patient shows crease in "repose." In other words, creases present when there is no facial muscle motion. The most common areas are the folds extending from the nose to the edges of the lips, the frown lines between the eyebrows and creases around the lips. Patients are amazed at the rapid and significant changes fillers can make in a matter of minutes. By using an appropriate nerve block, the procedure is painless.

Another sign of aging is thinning of the lips. Full, esthetically shaped lips are attractive and youthful. This is an area that the skill of the plastic surgeon is tested. After applying a nerve block, the procedure is painless and a skilled plastic surgeon can shape your new lip size or form either gradually over a number of treatments or to the shape or size of your liking im-



mediately. The result is beautiful, quick and lasting if performed by a plastic surgeon who truly appreciates the esthetics of a beautiful face.

If a younger patient develops mild skin laxity, Thermage can be employed.

This is a non-invasive office procedure to tighten loose but healthy facial and body skin. The procedure takes an hour, shows immediate results which improve over a six month period. This is Oprah's treatment of choice for facial aging.

Consider making an appointment with an experienced plastic surgeon to review option for your particular condition.