

# Plastic surgery business is booming

*Boomers say they want to look as good as they feel*

BY JENNIFER FEALS  
jfeals@seacoastonline.com

PORTSMOUTH — The effects of sun, time, gravity and the stresses of life can take a toll on our skin, but many are now turning back the clock.

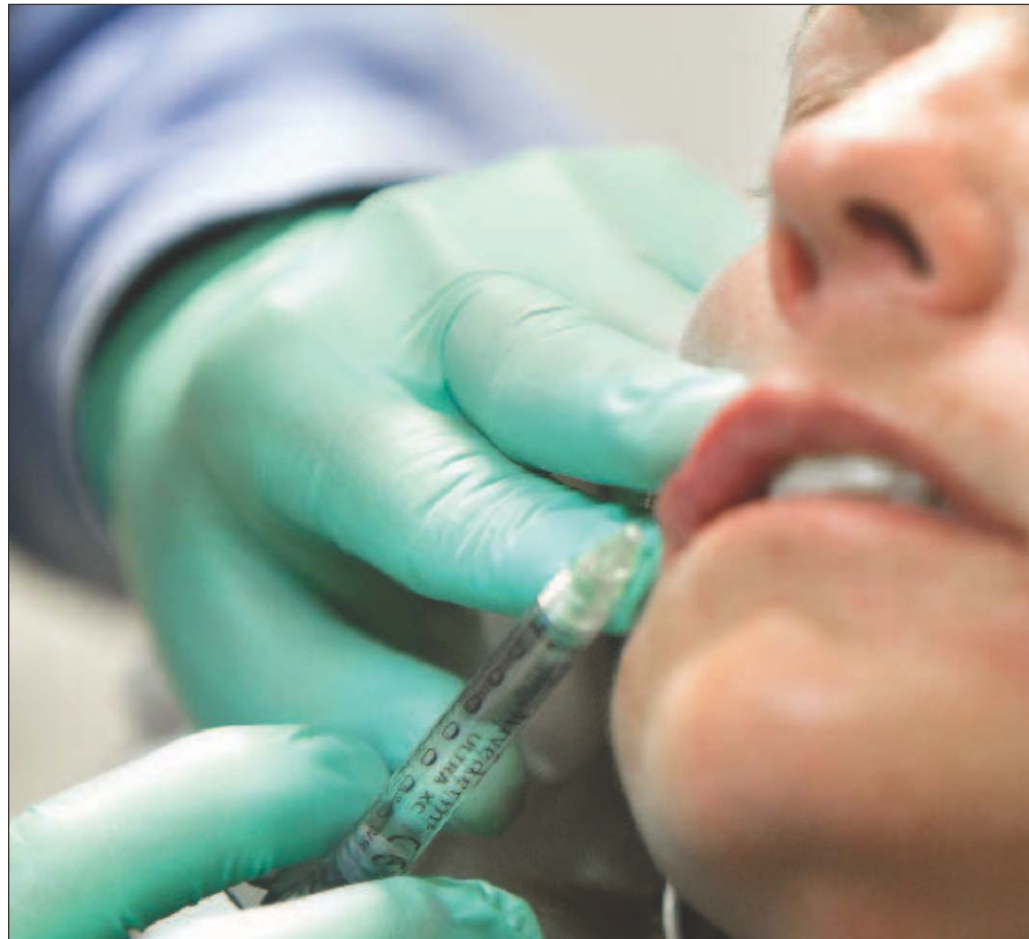
Local plastic surgeons have seen a steady increase in patients over 40 having non-surgical facial rejuvenation to combat the effects of aging.

Dr. Mark Ballentyne of the Skin Wellness Center at Atlantic Plastic Surgery has seen a 10 to 15 percent increase in clients trying to enhance their self-esteem and confidence in the workplace. Those who are looking for a cosmetic touch-up to their face and neck are turning to facial fillers — like Restylane and Juvederm — and Botox, he said.

“Both men and women are taking better care of themselves with diet and exercise. They still feel young and want to look as good as they can for their age,” said Ballentyne. “In general, people are trying to delay more of the surgical approach.”

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, there’s been a 584 percent increase in the number of patients nationally who received Botox injections from 2000 to 2010 and a 172 percent increase in patients who received facial fillers over those 10 years.

In 2000, 786,911 people received Botox injections nationally while in 2010, that number was 5,379,360. That’s an increase of 12 percent from 2009, when there were 4,795,357.



IOANNA RAPTIS/IRAPTIS@SEACOASTONLINE.COM

The Skin Wellness Center at Atlantic Plastic Surgery Center is seeing an increase in patients over 40 having non-surgical facial rejuvenation procedures.

Last year, 1,773,328 people received facial fillers, up from 1,722,054 in 2009 and 652,885 in 2000.

“More and more people are getting older. Baby boomers are the largest portion of our population and they want to stay young too,” said Phil Hayes, director of public relations for the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. “It’s not that societal norms have changed and people are looking at themselves any differently, it’s just that a large number of people are getting older and these things happen to be available. They are clinging to the fountain of youth.”

Ballentyne said the non-surgical procedures have become

increasingly popular on the Seacoast since he started with Atlantic Plastic Surgery Center eight years ago. Particularly interesting in this economy, as the procedures are purely elective and are not covered by insurance. A Botox injection will start around \$300, Ballentyne said, while a facial filler can begin at \$550.

Some patients start addressing the signs of aging in their 40s, Ballentyne said, using these non-surgical options to defer growing signs of aging. Many more, in their 50s and older, want to eliminate deep wrinkles and sagging that may have already developed, he said.

Dr. Charles Gaudet said

mouth, and even to enhance lips or cheeks. Fillers are temporary solutions administered through a few tiny injections on specific areas of the face. The results, which recapture a more youthful-looking face, can last from six months to a year or more, depending on the specific filler.

For deep creases between the eyebrows, around the eyes and mouth, and across the forehead, many patients are looking to neuromodulators such as Botox or Dysport. These effectively relax facial muscles underneath the skin, smoothing out the cause of the wrinkles. A treatment can last up to four months, Ballentyne said.

Botox, which has been in use for about 30 years, also has many strictly medicinal applications, Gaudet said, including treating hyperhidrosis, which causes excessive sweat, or blepharospasms, an uncontrolled muscle contraction of the eyelid.

The convenience, quick and visible results and non-surgical aspects of these treatments are growing in popularity, doctors said.

Fillers have been available for 25 to 30 years, Gaudet said, but were applied years ago with a collagen injection which required patients to undergo skin testing prior to receiving a treatment.

“It was painful and results didn’t last that long,” Gaudet said. “In the past 10 years, there have been more synthetically created facial fillers that can achieve a lifting, lifting with really little or no down time.”

But the treatments are not right for everyone. Patients with more severe wrinkling or sagging of the skin would better benefit from a mini- or full face lift, Ballentyne said.

There can also be minor complications including bruising, redness and swelling, which are short-lived, doctors said.



IOANNA RAPTIS/IRAPTIS@SEACOASTONLINE.COM

Dr. Mark Ballentyne of Atlantic Plastic Surgery administers Botox injections and dermal fillers to a patient.

Botox and facial fillers aren’t as effective as a face lift or similar surgical procedure, but they can provide a less costly and invasive alternative.

“It gives them a refreshed appearance. People want to keep their face looking how they feel,” he said. “A lot of people come in and say, listen, I feel a lot different than I look. I feel different than what my driver’s license says. This helps them match the way they look with how they feel.”

Areas in the face lose fat and collagen as a person ages, Ballentyne said, and can be volumized by facial fillers to reduce or eliminate laugh lines, wrinkles around the eyes, sagging skin around the