

An Option Your Mom Never Had: Mommy Makeover

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I recently had the honor of speaking at the *Mothers of Multiples* monthly meeting. We discussed many topics regarding plastic surgery. However, the topic of most interest was in regaining the figure that had changed drastically following pregnancy. Having twins, triplets, or even quintuplets only accentuates the changes the body undergoes following pregnancy.

Body contouring can correct many of the changes having children and gravity have on our shapes. The two main areas of concern are loss of breast volume and shape, and protrusion of the tummy, especially in the lower abdomen below the belly button. It is no wonder that in the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery 2007 statistics on cosmetic surgery, liposuction (456,000), breast augmentation (399,000), and abdominoplasty (185,000) are the 1st, 2nd and 4th most common cosmetic surgeries performed, with increasingly more of these procedures taking place in mothers after giving birth.

Loss of breast size and shape can many times be corrected by breast augmentation alone. Sometimes a lift is required, as the skin may have stretched too much for the implant to remain in the proper position. Implants can now be either filled with water or silicone. The safety of silicone has been documented in studies dating back to the Institute of Medicine's report in 2000 on the safety of breast implants. A newer technique that is now available for those with modest droop of the breast is called the dual plane placement of implants. This allows the surgeon to correct some of the droop of the breast without the additional incisions a lift may require. Your board-certified plastic surgeon can discuss your options with you.

All moms want their tummies to return to its pre-pregnancy shape. Although liposuction can remove localized areas of fullness, most of the time a full tummy tuck is needed to repair the weakness in the anterior abdominal wall caused by the constant pressure of the baby. Occasionally a hysterectomy



The bundle of joy beneath this beautiful canvas can weaken the abdominal wall leaving a pouch and many unwanted stretch marks.

or c-section scar will have healed down against the muscle and no longer moves freely. This can cause even a small amount of skin from above to fold over the c-section scar. The low incision of a tummy tuck can remove this "tethered" scar at the same time. In addition, a majority of the stretch marks on the lower belly will be removed when the extra skin is taken away. A board-certified plastic surgeon that specializes in body contouring will likely be able to provide computer imaging to explain the procedure and estimate realistically what results you may expect and where your incisions can be placed to hide them under the smallest of bikinis.

Don't be surprised if your plastic surgeon offers to operate in the office setting. There you can find a safe, cost effective, convenient, and confidential experience where you are the focus of attention. Ask your surgeon how you will be kept warm during the operation, how blood clots will be prevented if you have a surgery that lasts over an hour, and how

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your postoperative pain will be managed. Members of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and the

American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery have office surgery suites accredited for safety by a national accrediting organization.

Returning your body to its before-baby shape or even better can restore your confidence and self image. Be sure to do your homework when you begin your search. The ASAPS website offers great information at www.surgery.org. The ASPs website www.plasticsurgery.org is another good resource.

For more information you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Poulter at 309 692 6829 (Peoria Office) or 309 663 1222 (Bloomington Office) or toll-free 888 841 4108 – or simply email info@bodycontouringexperts.com. Visit www.bodycontouringexperts.com for additional information, before and after photos and videos of various procedures.

Resources for this article include:

American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery,
Cosmetic Surgery National Data Bank Statistics 2007

“Information for Women About the Safety of Silicone Breast Implants,” Institute of Medicine, 2000 Martha Grigg Editor, National Academy Press Washington, DC

“Office Surgery: Guidelines for Patient Safety” press release, American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, NY, NY; Feb 27, 2004.

“Surgical Facility Accreditation Mandated by American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery” press release, ASAPS NY,NY; July 9, 2001.

Bylaws, American Society of Plastic Surgeons Article XVI

Bylaws, American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery Article XII

www.BreastImplantSafety.org