

# AESTHETICA



Reveal your inner beauty

**Laser Surgery Center  
Cosmetic and Plastic Surgery  
Cosmetics and Skin Care**

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## About your surgery

### Facelift

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Wrinkles are the *textural* changes in the skin which result from a number of different processes. Folds, on the other hand, are *contour* abnormalities which result from aging, sun damage and loss of skin elasticity coupled with the effects of gravity and stress. For more information on wrinkles and folds, please help yourself to the **AESTHETICA** brochure **About your skin - Sun Sense and Aging**. For the most part, wrinkles are best treated with Retin-A®, chemical and laser peels. Folds, on the other hand, often require surgical correction if they are to be improved significantly. A minor degree of skin tightening can be obtained with peels but this is usually insufficient to rid the face of contour abnormalities.

With time, aging, sun damage and stress, deep creases form between the nose and the mouth (nasolabial folds), the jawline grows slack and jowly (marionette folds just beside the chin and jowls laterally) and fat deposits appear around the neck. Descent of the cheek fat pads occurs and, often, the fatty layer beneath the skin thins giving the appearance of drooping of the cheeks and hollowness of the eyes. The nasal tip can droop and the ear lobes often elongate. The red

portion of the lips often thin and the upper lip often elongates.

A facelift or *rhytidectomy* cannot stop the aging process, rather, it essentially “sets back the clock” by improving many of the visible signs of aging by removing excess fat, tightening underlying supporting structures and redraping the skin of your face and neck. It is of most use in the area of the cheeks and neck. The best candidates for facelift surgery are those whose bone structure is strong and well-defined and whose skin has retained some elasticity. A facelift can make you look younger and fresher in appearance and may enhance your self-confidence in the process. It cannot give you a totally different look nor can it restore the health and vitality of your youth. Think carefully about your expectations for and reasons for surgery and discuss them frankly with Dr. Caputy prior to your procedure(s).

When a facelift is performed by a competent plastic surgeon who is specialized in aesthetic surgery, complications are infrequent and usually minor. Dr. Caputy has trained with the world’s best plastic surgeons in both Europe and the U.S. and is the most highly trained aesthetic plastic surgeon in the world. As a consequence, the complications seen by him tend to be minor in nature. Still, individuals vary greatly in their anatomy, their physical reactions and their healing abilities; the outcome is never completely predictable. Complications that can occur include hematoma (a collection of blood under the skin which may need to be drained by Dr. Caputy), injury to the nerves that control the facial muscles (usually temporary), infection and reactions to anesthesia. Dr. Caputy has never had a patient who has suffered from permanent nerve injury in his practice. You can reduce your risk of these complications by closely following the pre and postoperative instructions

given to you by the **AESTHETICA** staff and Dr. Caputy.

Facelifts are very individualized procedures. Dr. Caputy will carefully evaluate your face and each of its component parts, your goals will be discussed and surgical possibilities derived. Medical conditions such as high blood pressure, blood clotting problems or excessive scarring will be checked for. Be certain to tell Dr. Caputy if you smoke, are diabetic, are taking any drugs (especially aspirin or “blood thinners” or herbal medications) or have any underlying serious medical conditions. Many patients will require preoperative medical and cardiac examinations prior to their surgery. Smoking must be stopped for at least three weeks before and four weeks following surgery. This may be a good time to quit! Smoking interferes with the blood flow to the skin and can compromise it to the point that some skin dies, leaving a large scar to heal. General healing is also decreased. If your hair is very short, you may wish to let it grow out prior to the surgery in order to better conceal the scar as it heals. The surgery is usually performed in the **AESTHETICA** outpatient surgical facility which is fully accredited and JCAHO certified. A board-certified anesthesiologist or nurse anesthetist will deliver your anesthetic and make you comfortable during the procedure. It is usually performed with local anesthetic and intravenous sedation (meaning that you are awake but quite drowsy, especially at particular points of the procedure), although, if desired by the patient or if the procedures to be performed will require prolonged anesthesia, general anesthetic may be used. The patient is often discharged home following an appropriate recovery period of rest and monitoring, however, it is not unusual for, at least, overnight observation in an overnight nursing facility or a hospital. These options will be discussed with you prior to your surgery and

appropriate arrangements made for you. Dr. Caputy has privileges to perform all of the procedures done in his office at all of the major hospitals in the Honolulu area. In the case of very extensive procedures being performed or medical conditions requiring monitoring, they may be done in the hospital or done during two or more sessions. Following the surgery, you will need help for a day or two and someone should be available for this.

**T**he surgical procedure itself is very individualized. It is often coupled with other procedures, the most common of which are facial liposuction, coronal lift, rhinoplasty (nasal surgery), blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery) and facial implant surgery. The procedure itself generally takes about three to four hours. One side of the face is generally completed at a time. Incisions usually begin at the sideburn and extend within the front of the ear, they then continue behind the earlobe and extend into the lower scalp at the back of the head. In general, the skin and subcutaneous tissue is separated from the deeper supporting structures (the SMAS or tough fascial layer) and that is separated from the deeper muscular layer. Occasionally a *deep-plane* facelift needs to be performed where dissection is performed deep to the facial muscles and, even less frequently beneath the covering of the bone (a so-called *sub-periosteal* lift). Dr. Caputy is well versed in all of these techniques and is able to apply the one which will best correct your deformity for you. Most surgeons, even those who perform many facelifts, are comfortable with only *their* technique and apply it to all patients. The individuality of what each person requires and that application is the measure of a true specialist - as Dr. Caputy is in aesthetic surgery. Fat may be trimmed or suctioned at and below the neck line and the chin. The underlying

structures are then tightened and re-suspended followed by tailoring of the skin and subcutaneous tissue and closure of the incisions. Thrombin glue may be used to assure adherence of this layer and decrease the incidence of hematoma and fluid collection beneath the skin. Occasionally, drains will also be placed (thin rubber tubes which evacuate this fluid). The head is usually wrapped in a postsurgical garment in order to minimize swelling and bruising.

**F**ollowing your surgery, there is usually only minimal discomfort: if there is, it can be lessened with pain medication which will be prescribed for you. Severe or persistent pain or a sudden swelling of your face should immediately be reported to Dr. Caputy and the **AESTHETICA** staff. Some numbness of the skin is quite normal and will disappear in a few weeks. You should keep your head elevated and avoid anything which raises the venous pressure in your face e.g. straining, yelling, bending and lifting, etc. This will keep the swelling down to a minimum. You should avoid wearing your eyeglasses directly on top of your ears as usual since this will reduce the blood supply to the area behind your ears and slow healing. Dressings and garments are removed the day following surgery but are then reapplied after examination to be worn for at least five to seven days after the surgery. Do not be surprised to see a puffy, swollen, pale and bruised face. This is normal. In a few days much of this will be resolved and in a few weeks you will look better than ever. Most of the stitches will be removed over the first three to five days although stitches in the hair may be left a few days longer. You will be up a day or two after surgery but plan on taking it easy for at least seven to ten days. Avoid strenuous exercise, sex and housework for three to four weeks.

Walking and stretching are fine a few days after surgery. Avoid alcohol, saunas, steam baths, Jacuzzi's and heat for several weeks. The sun must be avoided or, at least, SPF 30 sunscreen used for several months. Above all, get plenty of rest and allow your body to spend its energy on healing. At first, head motion and speech will feel strange and "tight", your features will be distorted due to swelling and you will be self-conscious about your scars. It is not unusual for patients to be depressed or disappointed at first. Some days will feel as though none or little progress has been made. By the third week you will look and feel much better. Most patients are back to work after seven to fourteen days. If you require it, special camouflage make can mask the bruising and scars that remain.

**A**lmost all patients are extremely pleased with facelift results - especially if they realize that the healing process can take up to two years and, often, the results may not be fully and immediately apparent. After the swelling and bruising are gone, the skin may feel rough and dry for several months. Males may have to shave in areas they are not used to shaving although electrolysis is an excellent means of correcting this altered beard line. The scars will usually be difficult to see and will be hidden in natural skin creases. Sometime superficial vessels are more apparent after facelift but these can be readily removed with laser treatments. They generally fade with time and are scarcely visible after a few months. Your face will continue to age with time but the effects of the facelift will last for many years.

**I**hope that this short informational brochure answers some of the questions which you have about facelifts. Please ask either the

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staff of **AESTHETICA** or Dr. Caputy  
should you have any other questions about your  
skin and facelifts.

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