

# the ART of PLASTIC surgery

## Body Contouring

Gregory M. Fedele, MD, FACS  
Center for Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery Inc.

**M**odels in magazines. Smiling faces on TV. Maybe even your next-door neighbor or co-worker.

You've envied those women with curves in the right places and a perfectly symmetrical figure. They look as if they must work out for hours each day to achieve such a flat stomach, tight buttocks, muscular legs and shapely arms.

Meanwhile, you can't get rid of the saddlebags despite exercising three times a week; flatten your stomach, which has been out of shape since you gave birth, even after a thousand sit-ups; or firm up your arms by lifting countless weights. No matter what you do, nothing changes.

But there is a way. Now, you can get that improved shape through surgical body contouring. Dr. Gregory Fedele combines the experience of a board-certified plastic surgeon with the skill of an artist to create the body you've always wanted.



Artistic renderings by Gregory M. Fedele, M.D.

# GETTING THE SHAPE YOU WEREN'T BORN WITH

Just as a sculptor molds clay to form the graceful curves of the human body, Dr. Gregory Fedele surgically and artistically shapes bodies to achieve the ideal form.

Through "body contouring," Fedele improves the body's overall appearance. Body contouring includes:

- liposuction
- lower-body lift
- buttocks lift
- tummy tuck
- arm lift
- thigh lift

"These procedures can be done individually or in combination, such as liposuction with a tummy tuck," explains Fedele. "For a patient who wants everything, we may have to break it up into stages for safety reasons. We don't want to keep someone under anesthesia for a very long time."

Fedele says he sees people of all ages — both men and women — who want body-contouring procedures. One of the most common reasons women cite for a tummy tuck is loss of stomach tone due to multiple pregnancies.

In addition, anyone who has had a massive weight loss — either on his or her own or because of gastric bypass surgery — generally needs excess skin removed and tightening around the trunk area.

"As an artist, you tend to view things differently. Your aesthetic sense is a little bit more in tune. With drawing or painting, you're starting with a blank canvas. You're starting from scratch. A human body is different. You're starting with a structure or form already present. A patient comes to you with a nose that is a certain shape or a breast that is a certain size, and then you're molding or shaping it into something that's more pleasing or aesthetically more attractive. That's what artists do and that's what I do."

— Dr. Gregory Fedele, Center for Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery

## Liposuction

Liposuction remains the most popular type of body contouring. In 2003, more than 320,000 people had liposuction.

"The important thing to know is that liposuction only removes fat," Fedele explains. "It does not tighten the skin. You have to rely on your own body for that. The younger you are, the more likely that your skin is going to snap back after liposuction."

Liposuction is an outpatient procedure. Numerous small incisions — about a quarter-inch each — are made and a device is used to literally suck the fat out of the body. Scarring

is usually minimal and well hidden.

While patients may feel some soreness and bruising, most are able to return to work and normal activities within a week.

## Tummy Tucks and Lower-body Lift

Tummy tucks and lower-body lifts are more invasive surgical procedures.

Tummy tucks tighten both the skin and lax muscles of the abdomen, while removing fat to give the stomach a flatter appearance. The scar is usually hidden in the bikini line, so it is possible to wear a bathing suit.

## 'I WISH I HAD DONE IT SOONER,' SAY WOMEN WHO HAD BODY CONTOURING AFTER WEIGHT LOSS.

Michelle and Judy have never met each other, although both women experienced the same life-changing event.

After years of fighting excessive weight, both women had bariatric surgery, also known as gastric bypass surgery. They were among more than 100,000 people who underwent the procedure in 2003.

But while each lost more than 100 pounds following the surgery, neither liked what she saw in the mirror. Their skin, once plumped out by fat, now just hung off their bodies. It was uncomfortable and unsightly.

It can also be unhealthy. Many weight-loss patients with excess skin are prone to yeast infections in the folds of the skin, according to Dr. Gregory Fedele, a board-certified plastic surgeon in Willoughby Hills.



Frustrated by the excess skin, both women made the decision to go for body contouring. Both chose Fedele.

"That was the icing on the cake," says Judy, 58, a retired facilities worker. "My stomach is now board flat."

Last June, Judy had the excess skin and fat removed around her abdominal area, then returned in July to have her arms and legs done.



Fedele removed more than 30 pounds of excess skin, though he admits that five or 10 pounds is the average for such a surgery.

The change from size 26 to size 8 is so dramatic that Judy says many people don't even recognize her when they pass her on the street.

Michelle calls herself a "career dieter," losing and gaining up to 100

Lower-body lifts include a tummy tuck, as well as the removal of excess skin on the lateral sides through the hip and buttocks area. This gives the waistline a more dramatic curve and slimmer appearance.

Depending on the amount of skin that needs to be removed, the scar can stretch around the waist like a belt.

These procedures require patients to spend up to several days in the hospital. Recovery time is usually about two to three weeks.

### Arm and Leg Lifts

Less flab and more definition is the main reason for an arm lift.

Some people are just born with massive arm girth. Those who experience a dramatic weight loss — sometimes more than 100 pounds — will have skin that hangs and is both uncomfortable and unsightly. In both cases, buying clothes that fit around hefty arms can be a challenge.

An arm lift will shape and define the upper-arm area. It requires an incision on the inside of the arm that stretches from the armpit to the elbow. In some cases, the scar can be wide.

"The trade-off is improvement in contour or appearance at the expense of a permanent scar," says Fedele. "But those people who have

this excess tissue will take the trade-off of the scar, rather than continuing to live with this hanging skin."

Similarly, leg lifts remove excess skin and fat from the upper leg or thigh area to the knee. These are sometimes done in conjunction with a lower-body lift.

### Before You Choose Body Contouring

**Be at Your Ideal Weight:** "Body contouring is best done when the patient is at or near the ideal body weight," says Fedele. While some patients lose a significant amount of weight in excess skin from body-contouring procedures, Fedele urges patients to view the surgical procedure as a way to firm up and shape the body — not as an alternative to weight loss.

**Make Sure You're Finished with Pregnancy:** Getting pregnant following a tummy tuck can undo the procedure, leaving stomach muscles and skin flabby all over again. Rather than waste the time and money, save your tummy tuck until you're finished having children.

**Quit Smoking:** Smoking can put cosmetic-surgery patients at risk for numerous complications, including infection and poor healing. Many physicians will not perform elective surgery on smokers. ■

## BY THE NUMBERS\*

- Liposuction was the most popular plastic surgery procedure for women in 2003, the third most popular procedure for men. With both groups combined, liposuction is second only to nose reshaping as the most popular cosmetic procedure for men and women combined.
- More than 320,000 patients had liposuction in 2003, an increase of 13 percent over 2002.
- Buttocks lifts increased 74 percent from 2002 to 2003. That's the most significant increase in any plastic-surgery procedure.
- Tummy tucks increased by 18 percent from 2002 to 2003.
- More than 52,000 body-contouring procedures were performed on patients who had had bariatric (weight loss) surgery in 2003 (103,000 people had bariatric surgery that year).
- During the past three years, upper-arm lifts have increased more than 1,000 times. In 2003, upper-arm lifts increased by 66 percent.
- Thigh lifts increased by 33 percent from 2002 to 2003.
- Lower-body lifts increased 14 percent from 2002 to 2003, but saw a dramatic increase of more than 2,000 times during the past three years.
- About 70 percent of upper-arm and thigh lifts were performed on post-bariatric patients.

*\*American Society of Plastic Surgeons*

pounds at a time. All that yo-yoing made her skin too saggy to bounce back into shape. The bariatric surgery only compounded the issue.

Still, Michelle admits that just taking the first step to visit a plastic surgeon was tough.

"It's really embarrassing," she says. "These people are moving your fat around, measuring your fat and marking it up because they're going to cut it off. It's horrible. But Dr. Fedele made me feel really comfortable."

But then Michelle got a double hernia, a common side effect of bariatric surgery. She had to have surgery anyway, so it made sense to have body contouring at the same time as the hernia repair.

That also meant that some of the cost for the anesthetic and hospitalization were defrayed since insurance covered the hernia operation, but not the cosmetic surgery.

"[Dr. Fedele] performed a miracle. He did an amazing job on me," Michelle says. "He put me in proportion."

Michelle wore a size 26, but is now a 10 on top and 14 on the bottom. In fact, she has let very few people in on her secret. Her co-workers all think she's just done a great job with exercise and diet.

Now, exercise and diet are part of

her routine. She does strength training and walks more than 35 miles a week. Without the excess weight, even exercising is less embarrassing and just easier.

"If people haven't seen me in a long time, they totally freak out," Michelle says. "The upper body is all exercise, but the bottom part of me is mainly Dr. Fedele. He is unbelievable."



## Our Aesthetician



Simone has been a medically trained, fully licensed aesthetician since 1993, with more than 12 years of experience in skin care in the field of plastic and cosmetic surgery. Simone works closely with Dr. Fedele

and has extensive knowledge of pre- and postoperative skin care, corrective treatments for acne, sun damage and all other aspects of skin rejuvenation. In addition, Simone has more than seven years of experience with cosmetic tattooing (permanent makeup) for eyeliner, eyebrows and lips.

Following a private consultation with Dr. Fedele, Simone conducts a comprehensive skin-care evaluation to help determine what kind of treatment will provide the best results to rejuvenate your skin. All skin-care treatments in our office are focused on revitalizing your

skin using the highest-quality hypoallergenic, non-comedogenic products, only available through a physician's office. Call today for a free skin-care consultation with Simone and find out how we can get you on track to healthier, younger-looking skin.

We have a variety of products and services to meet your skin-care needs, including:

- Microdermabrasion
- Lunchtime facial rejuvenation peels
- Biomedic micropeel
- Refinity peel
- Eyelash and eyebrow tinting
- Waxing
- Permanent makeup
- Camouflage makeup

Skin-care products:

- Biomedic/La Roche Posay
- Physicians Choice of Arizona
- Neova
- Youngblood Mineral Makeup

## Our Philosophy

At the Center for Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery, we understand that considering cosmetic surgery is a very personal and serious decision. Dr. Fedele will meet with you and work closely with you to tailor each procedure to meet your individual needs.

Dr. Fedele and his staff will take the time to answer all your questions and concerns to ensure you are comfortable and have a complete understanding of the procedure you choose.

We welcome you and look forward to working with you on your journey toward a positive outlook and renewed confidence.

**Make an appointment today to learn more about the "art of plastic surgery" with Dr. Gregory Fedele and the wide range of services he offers.**

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*The skills of a surgeon, the eyes and hands of an artist.*

**Gregory M. Fedele, MD, FACS**

Certified, American Board of Plastic Surgery

