

HEY GO

On a knife edge
— Plastic surgery is
drastic, but so are
the results

Dr Saul Braun

A nip here, a tuck there, a few years off the face and it's you, but a newer, smoother version. And why not? Male grooming is not just about moisturisers and sunscreen - we're talking visits to salons, aesthetic practitioners and even going under the knife.

So the secret's out lads, it's not just the women in your life who're visiting their plastic surgeons and aesthetic practitioners for a touch up here and there.

The fact is, more and more men are choosing to ignore the traditional stigmas attached to personal grooming. They've embraced the metrosexual revolution, delved into the delights of moisturisers and sunscreens, after-shave lotions that care for the skin and a generally much more groomed look than the cavemen of yesteryear, and we like it!

Today's man is taking a new look at plastic surgery, and it's not just the

'my ears stick out or my nose is so crooked from a rugby injury I can't breath' brigade that are at it either. Today's businessman needs to fight the perception that younger is better, quicker thinking and more innovative. He wants to push back the ravages of time, just like his wife does, and yes, he wants to look good!

Enter the world of facial rejuvenation, botox, fillers, calf implants and more as we discover that real men do have facelifts!

At eight o'clock on a Monday morning Dr Saul Braun's Rosebank rooms are already busy. It's a friendly, quietly elegant space that inspires confidence. Just the place I'd feel comfortable in if I

were here for an appointment with the man who, according to his patients at least, is one of the best boob men in Joburg.

But I'm not. I'm here to chat to him about men having plastic surgery. And according to Dr Braun, it's a phenomenon that's on the rise. Why? we wonder. Who are these men and what are they having done? According to Dr Braun there are two peaks. The first are younger men in their early to mid 20s. They come to me because they are not happy with their looks - things like ears that stick out or big noses. There's also the problem of gynaecomastia, or male breasts. These can be caused by the use of steroids

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or they can appear at puberty, no one knows the cause. It's not fat, either, it's actual breast tissue that can be very embarrassing.

The second peak is men in their mid to late 50s. They're starting to feel immensely pressured by all these young kids with their MBAs climbing the corporate ladder at a furious rate. Just think how young the CEOs of places like Discovery Health are ... they're in their late 40s - it used to be that only men in their 60s could make CEO. Now there's a perception that younger is better, that the older you get the less capable you become.

I think men feel the need to look younger not for vanity reasons, but because of work pressure. I see a lot of top businessmen who need to get every edge they can. It's a sad affair, but true.

Men are coming to me for botox and fillers, facelifts, eyelid lifts, calf implants, liposuction ... you name it. Calf implants are one of the few procedures I do more for men than women. The calf muscle is the only muscle you cannot increase in size with exercise. It's genetically determined and no matter how many calf raises you do, you're stuck with them. We tend to do calf implants mostly for weight lifters, bodybuilders and sportsmen. We also do tummy tucks for men who have undergone significant weight loss.

Men who want botox and fillers are coming to us in their late 30s and early 40s, whilst men looking for anti-ageing and rejuvenation procedures are generally in their mid to late 50s - about five or six years older than women looking for the same procedures. In terms of race, African men are definitely having procedures done, but it's still very rare. I've done four African men in my 30 years of practice. Two

were heads of State and two were top businessmen.'

Downtime remains the same for men and women, with facelifts requiring 10 days off work, tummy tucks two weeks and nose jobs one week. But if you notice your mate's been off work and he comes back looking a little different, refreshed and, dare we say it, younger, don't comment on it.

'Men are still very private about plastic surgery', says Dr Braun with a smile. 'Even in the United States, where men have been having this type of surgery

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for a lot longer, you won't find many men chatting about who did their face or their eyes. Men are very polite about it, they don't comment on it or make a fuss.'