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[American Society of Plastic Surgeons](#)

Barbed sutures, wrinkle fillers give patients more innovative, non-surgical options

Program presented at American Society of Plastic Surgeons annual scientific meeting

PHILADELPHIA – Patients without time for a facelift or intimidated by surgery now have more minimally invasive options that produce effective results. Barbed sutures, ultrasonic body contouring and soft tissue fillers, three emerging trends in the plastic surgery industry, offer patients faster results without the downtime of surgery, according to a program held today at the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) Plastic Surgery 2004 conference in Philadelphia.

"Plastic surgery patients want shorter, minimally invasive procedures that produce results and have limited downtime," said Leroy Young, MD, chair of the ASPS Committee on Emerging Trends. "As plastic surgeons, we are always searching for cutting-edge technology to meet the demand of our patients. Barbed sutures, ultrasonic technology and wrinkle fillers fit the bill."

Barbed sutures are a bit like barbed wire that have little cuts in the side of the suture, allowing the barb to catch when it is passed through tissue. The catch allows the plastic surgeon to pull on the suture once it is in place and tighten the tissue. This surgical development is expected to increase the number of people having facial rejuvenation, according to Dr. Young, because the sutures themselves are minimally invasive, require almost no downtime and are low risk.

Ultrasonic body contouring uses ultrasound to disrupt, destroy and disperse targeted fat cells, giving patients the benefits of liposuction without the pain and recovery time.

Last year, more than 7 million minimally invasive procedures were performed, up 43 percent from the previous year. Almost 11 percent used a soft tissue filler to fight wrinkles, furrows and folds. With the addition of Restylane®, Hylaform®, and Sculptra™, plastic surgeons expect patient demand for wrinkle fillers to skyrocket.

These trends, as well as other technologies, will be discussed during the ASPS "Emerging Trends – Hot Topics in Plastic Surgery" program, 7:45 a.m. – 12 p.m. today at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia. Approximately 20 new technologies and devices in plastic surgery will be presented.

Studies and courses on other emerging, minimally invasive procedures are being presented at Plastic Surgery 2004, including the Fraxel™ SR Laser, ThermoCool™ System and

mesotherapy (mesoplasty).

Fraxel SR Laser, the next generation in laser light treatment which received FDA approval in July 2004, helps remove age spots better than previous lasers as well as lessens wrinkles, according to information presented at Plastic Surgery 2004. Unlike other lasers, this laser uses light to heat and remove microscopic pinpoint of skin, promoting a more effective result and faster recovery. This new laser treatment may replace deep chemical peels and laser skin resurfacing, which often leave the skin raw and take more than a week to heal.

ThermaCool offers patients facial rejuvenation without invasive surgery. A non-laser, radiofrequency device that heats the lower layers of the skin, ThermaCool may tighten the skin and improve skin texture. In addition, it may dramatically improve the skin of patients with acute cystic acne. According to a study presented at Plastic Surgery 2004, patients who had ThermaCool saw a notable difference after one treatment, experienced skin tightening and improved skin texture.

Mesotherapy is a potential alternative for removing localized fat without liposuction. The treatment, a combination of chemical and herbal remedies injected directly into the body, allegedly helps increase circulation to the targeted area, break down fat and prevent fat from forming. According to a study presented at Plastic Surgery 2004, patients who had mesotherapy lost 4.2 centimeters around the waist and 2.5 centimeters around the thighs.

These minimally invasive options will be presented during Plastic Surgery 2004 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia:

- "Advances in Cosmetic Laser Surgery," today, noon.
 - "ThermaCool TC: For Skin Tightening, Active Acne and Scars," Sunday, Oct. 10, 8:20 a.m.
 - "Mesoplasty: A New Approach to Non-surgical Liposculpture," Sunday, Oct. 10, 7:50 a.m.
- "Patients should be aware of their options and risks when undergoing any of these procedures. Some of them haven't been studied enough in clinical trials to show their efficacy and safety," said ASPS President Rod Rohrich, MD. "Ultimately, the question remains – who are good candidates for these procedures and what are the long-term effects?"

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For referrals to plastic surgeons certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery and to learn more about reconstructive and cosmetic plastic surgery, call the ASPS at 888-4-PLASTIC (888-475-2784) or visit www.plasticsurgery.org.

ASPS is the largest organization of board-certified plastic surgeons in the world and the foremost authority on cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery. With nearly 5,000 members, more than any other plastic surgery organization, ASPS is the definitive voice of the plastic surgery specialty. Viewed throughout the world as the pinnacle of information for new techniques, advances and plastic surgery trends, the society represents 94 percent of all the board-certified plastic surgeons in the U.S. Ninety-four percent of all ASPS members perform cosmetic plastic surgery and 89 percent of all ASPS members perform reconstructive plastic surgery. ASPS, founded in 1931, represents physicians certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

Many of the above subjects presented at Plastic Surgery 2004 are procedures or technologies currently under investigation and are presented for research and educational purposes. Some need more scientific study to determine efficacy and success rate. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons and the Plastic Surgery Educational Foundation do not endorse the procedures or technologies presented in the program and recommend that any reporting of the presented information be done responsibly with full disclosure of their unproven nature.

Note: Reporters can register to attend Plastic Surgery 2004 and arrange interviews with presenters by logging on to www.plasticsurgery.org/news_room/Annual-Meeting-Media-Information.cfm or by contacting ASPS Public Relations at 847-228-9900 or in Philadelphia, October 9-13 at 215-418-5310.

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