

Just the Mini, Please...

“I don’t want a full facelift, just a mini...”

is a request we hear frequently from patients. While it is perfectly rational to do the **least invasive procedure to meet the goals**, selection of the appropriate procedure is a decision best involving both surgeon and patient. It is no wonder many consumers are confused about the options. We are bombarded with advertising from companies and providers promoting their services. Admittedly, a little less now following the bankruptcy and legal quagmire surrounding the “Lifestyle Lift” organization. To further complicate things, the same procedure can have multiple names. The intent of this article is to help clear up some misunderstandings and hopefully provide better guidance for those interested in facial rejuvenation.

While the magical non-surgical facelift has yet to become reality, the importance of **volume restoration and maintaining healthy skin** has been brought to the forefront. Indeed, we utilize volume enhancement in almost all facial rejuvenation procedures today. Most commonly this is accomplished with fat grafting, but dermal fillers are certainly an applicable choice as well. Old-style facelifts simply pulled the skin as tight as possible. Whereas, modern procedures restore fullness in areas where it has been lost. Volume restoration significantly enhances the rejuvenation effect. We see the importance of skin care every day in our office due to close coordination with Karen Sims, RN and her staff at Aesthetic Skin Care Center, LLC. Karen has been specializing in skin care for over 20 years. Her practice initially started helping facelift patients maintain the effect of the surgery as long as possible.

The concept of a “mini” lift, implies that the procedure is limited to a specific anatomic area. For example, **a cheek lift is a mini lift only addressing the cheeks and not the neck**. Although there are variations, my favorite procedure fitting this description is the MACS lift. “MACS” is an acronym for **Minimal Access Cranial Suspension** lift. The longevity of the procedure

is gained by using strong sutures to suspend and anchor the muscle layer of the face. Over this, the skin is re-draped vertically. Fat grafting to the cheek bone area and around the mouth is usually combined to address all components of the aging process. However, the MACS it is a true mini lift, where the effect is focused on the cheek area with only a limited effect on the neck.



Sometimes, there is more **age-related change in the neck** than in the face. In which case, a neck lift operation may be just right. The effect of a neck lift is limited to the neck with some minimal change along the lower cheek and jawline. Commonly, there is enough change along the jawline that a low face and neck lift is a better alternative. While the latter procedure may not meet the strictest definition of “mini” it allows us to achieve a more complete rejuvenation and address the most common areas of facial aging.

Moving up the scale to a full facelift, the incision is brought further upward along the hairline at the temples and this allows rejuvenation of the cheek, jawline, and neck. Even with this procedure, I favor the **“short scar” approach** which limits

incision length and avoids incisions within the hair. The youthful face is framed by a close hairline which we wish to preserve.

In summary, the operation must be tailored to address the areas where aging is present. Performing a procedure which does not address the areas of concern will not lead to a satisfactory outcome. Further, it is important that all areas of the face blend together to look normal. The best surgery looks like no surgery has been performed. Consultation with your American Board of Plastic Surgery certified surgeon is the best, and safest, way to select the right procedure for your unique face.

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Dr. David Kim is a Board Certified Plastic Surgeon who is devoted to advanced techniques in Cosmetic Surgery of the Face, Breast, and Body. In private practice since 1998, he is located in a state of the art facility which includes a full service skin care center. The practice is focused on personalized patient care and attention to detail. Where possible, Dr. Kim utilizes minimally invasive procedures. The goal is to deliver quality clinical results while minimizing patient recovery time. Examples of this include a no-drain tummy tuck, armpit incision breast augmentation with gel or saline implants, fat grafting, and a short scar facelift. In addition, Dr. Kim and nurse-injectors Carey Sanders, RN and Shirley Ramsey DNP, APRN, offer a full spectrum of non-surgical treatments such as Botox®, Dysport®, Restylane®, Juvederm®, Voluma®, Radiesse®, Kybella® & laser.