

A photograph of three surgeons in an operating room. They are wearing blue surgical masks and green scrubs. Two surgeons in the foreground are wearing large, white headlamps with multiple lenses. A third surgeon in the background is wearing a yellow surgical mask. The scene is brightly lit, and the background shows a window with greenery outside.

New face of  
plastic surgery

Cosmetic and rejuvenation procedures have gone from being something that purely the rich and famous do, to a trend seen in mainstream America.

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*By Linda Gilchrist*

**D**on Truby is beaming. His smile broadens as he looks across the room at his wife, Arden. “He just sits and stares,” Arden Truby says. “He just loves the new me.”

Truby spent years contemplating plastic surgery and doing research on what to do and who she would select to perform it. Finally, Dr. Anthony Brissett, a facial plastic surgeon at The Methodist Hospital, gave Arden — and Don — the face they have been wanting.

“When you turn 50 and you look in the mirror, or when your husband makes comments that you are getting jowls, you say, ‘OK. Let’s do it,’” Truby says.

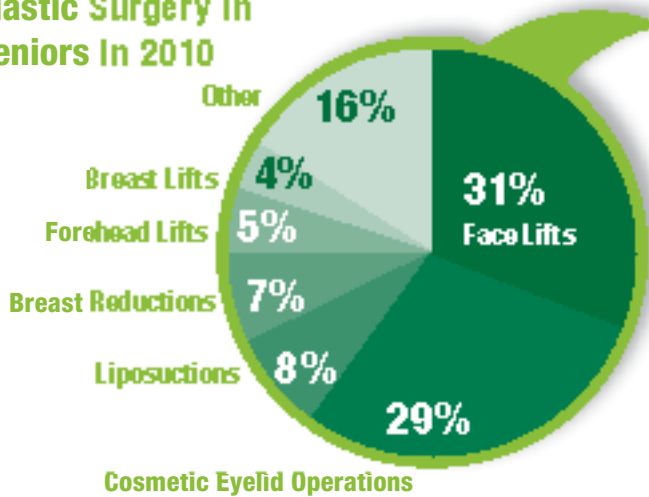


Dr. Anthony Brissett



Arden Thuby, before and after

### Plastic Surgery In Seniors In 2010



### BODY REJUVENATION PROCEDURES

are at an all-time high, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. In 2010, more than 3.2 million Americans age 55 and older chose some type of cosmetic surgery. That age group represents 26 percent of the total cosmetic surgery market and a 4 percent increase over the previous year.

“It’s clear that people are becoming increasingly aware of rejuvenation procedures,” says Brissett, who is also director of facial plastic and reconstructive surgery, Baylor College of Medicine.

Source: American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery

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## LAST YEAR, TRUBY SAYS SHE SAW

a magazine's list of top surgeons in Houston and found Brissett. She reviewed his credentials and made an appointment. She did her homework. "Of course I did, it is my face," she says.

"You hear so many horror stories. You want to make sure you're going to the right person. When I went in for my first consultation ... he just made me feel relaxed," she says. "He said right off the bat, 'I don't want to do this in a hurry. I want to make sure this is what you really want to do.'"

"He also wanted to meet my husband to make sure we were on the same page going into surgery," she says.

Truby had three appointments with Brissett to give her a chance to have all her questions answered, and to give her and his staff a chance to condition her skin, which included treatments to make her skin smooth and ready for surgery.

"There are some people who are 50, but look like they are 70. And there are some people who are 70, who look like they are 50," says Dr. Jeffery Friedman, chairman of the Division of Plastic Surgery at Methodist. "How people age is in their genes, and you can't change it. We set the clock back in terms of one's facial appearance."

Truby says she was one of those looks-older-than-her-age types. "I looked 70, but I'm 61." She attributes the sagging and wrinkles to the stress of caring for a terminally ill child while also taking care of two other children, a very stressful first marriage, and smoking until she was 29.

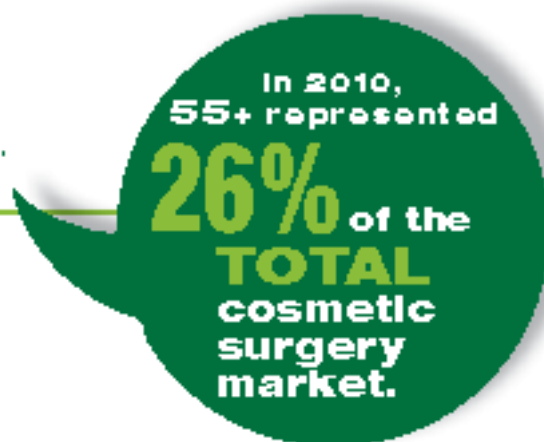
A biker babe who enjoys riding on the back of her husband's Harley-Davidson motorcycle, Truby feels like she has turned back the hands of time. "Now I look about the same as when I was in my 40s," she says.

Brissett performed a facelift, blepharoplasty (under the eye lift), a chemical peel, submental liposuction and platysmal plication (a lower face and neck lift) in June. The surgery took eight hours. After an overnight hospital stay, she left the hospital without having to wear bandages, but she continues to wear a support band for her neck at night.

Truby's recovery process will continue for a few more months. She still has some numbness along her jaw line, around her ears and neck. "But it's not anything you can't live with or that will disrupt your daily routine. It is nothing that will keep you down," she says.

Such surgery can cost between \$8,000 and \$14,000, which does not include hospital costs. She says it was money well spent as far as she and her husband are concerned. "I'm my husband's new Mercedes," she laughs.

# Rejuvenation efforts are not limited to the face.



Source: American Society of Plastic Surgeons

**T**HERE ARE MANY EXPLANATIONS for the increase in rejuvenation procedures. For 40- to 54-year-olds in particular, the increase reflects their desire to look good and feel better about their bodies.

Another reason for the increase is that many of the minimally invasive procedures, like soft tissue fillers or botulinum toxin, are now available at an office visit.

“We are at the leading edge of medicine, pushing the envelope in developing and perfecting new techniques,” Brissett says. “Methodist has been a leader in the use of contemporary concepts and modern technology for cosmetic and reconstructive procedures.”

He says about 10 to 15 percent of his cosmetic patients are men, an increase in the past few years. “It is not just men who are striving to look younger in the workplace, but that oftentimes is a factor that brings them into the office,” he explains.

“We are seeing men who, with a change in the economy, need to stay in the workforce longer. They are finding themselves in a competitive environment — whether it is a sales-related industry or some other competitive industry — where workers are younger and they, perhaps, want an opportunity to compete for the same jobs.”

Friedman says rejuvenation efforts are not limited to the face; women who are past the point of childbearing and are showing the signs of past pregnancies consider tummy tucks.

Plastic surgery was spoken about in hushed tones 15 or 20 years ago, but these days, people are fairly open about their desire to rejuvenate their bodies. “Cosmetic and rejuvenation procedures have gone from being something that purely the rich and famous do, to a trend seen in mainstream America,” Brissett says.

He says there is a multitude of reasons for this shift. “As people age, they want to continue to look youthful,” he says. “We have a group of baby boomers who are seeing age-related physical changes in their appearance and have

the financial means to slow the process. These two factors come together to create a desire for rejuvenation procedures.

“We also see an increase in cultural diversity as it relates to people pursuing those procedures. So we have African Americans, Hispanics and Asians who increasingly are pursuing cosmetic and surgical rejuvenation procedures,” he says.

Both Friedman and Brissett believe that it is important for patients to do their homework: Know what you want and what your expectations are. “Our ultimate goal is to make our patients happy, but if their expectations are far beyond what can be achieved, they will not be happy,” Friedman says.

“In my practice, I don’t operate on anybody unless I’ve seen them twice, so that they get a full sense of what they are getting into, and they are getting all their questions answered. I get the opportunity to make sure I meet all their expectations.”

“There are certainly people who might not be good candidates for these procedures,” Brissett says. “If their desired goal is not realistic, or if they are not in good health, whether it be from an overall physiological perspective or even a psychological or psychiatric perspective.”

Both doctors say you need to have well-thought-out reasons for having plastic surgery.

“Surgery is not going to save a marriage, it is not going to keep people from getting a divorce, and it is not going to get you a job. It needs to be done for the right reason — self-satisfaction,” Friedman says.

“I would tell people to think about it, research it. Don’t be in a hurry, and make sure you’ve got the right person to do the surgery before you take that step,” Truby says. “I feel like if I wanted to go back to work, I could probably get rehired. I couldn’t be happier.” ■