

So You're Considering Cosmetic Surgery

The Essential Guide for Potential Patients



Presented by Dr. Grant Stevens

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WELCOME

Deciding to have cosmetic surgery is a personal process, unique for every individual. Most people considering cosmetic surgery have been unhappy with some part of their physical appearance for quite some time. For some men and women the goal is to turn back the clock, others only hope to correct physical imperfections that have affected their self-esteem for years. And while it is true that “beauty is only skin deep,” for many people, cosmetic surgery can enhance self confidence and body image, strengthening their “inner beauty” as well.

While the decision to have cosmetic surgery is one you must make on your own, there is information that anyone considering an elective procedure should have. Once a person is armed with information, they know the questions to ask and the things to look for. This helps potential patients find a qualified, experienced physician with a safe and comfortable surgery center, while creating a foundation for realistic expectations regarding what will happen before and after your surgery including risks and any potential complications.

This booklet discusses the important information you need to know in order to make the best decision for yourself. It also discusses aspects of surgery that can affect your daily life, such as financing or payment options, how long to take off from work, and how best to prepare for a surgical procedure.

WELCOME

Thank you for downloading this booklet – we are sure you will find it very helpful. If you have questions regarding specific procedures or the practice’s offerings, please call or email us and we will help you get the information that you need. We can also help to set up a consultation to help you determine if cosmetic surgery is the right option for you.

Warmest Regards,

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

IS SEEING BELIEVING?	5 - 7
WORTH 1000 WORDS	8 - 10
FINDING THE RIGHT SURGEON	11 - 14
THE SURGICAL SETTING	15 - 17
FEES & FINANCING	18 - 19
SETTING EXPECTATIONS	20
YOUR CONSULTATION	21 - 23
PREPARING FOR SURGERY	24 - 26
RISKS & COMPLICATIONS	27 - 28
RECOVERY	29 - 31
MAINTAINING YOUR RESULT	32 - 34
THANK YOU!	35

IS SEEING BELIEVING?

So you're considering cosmetic surgery. While it may have taken a while to get this far, serious questions may be looming in your head: how do you find the right physician? How do you find the information you need? Who can you trust?

Be a Discerning Consumer of Online Information

Today, many people turn to the internet for answers to some very personal questions. But, how do you know that you can believe what you read? What should you look for? Where should you turn first?

While you can always call a surgeon's office to get more information, sometimes getting online can get you the general information that you are seeking, immediately.

Your online research might include:

Websites. Physician websites can be a nice introduction to the doctor's practice, but don't let a nicely designed website be your sole reason to choose a doctor. You need to meet the physician, the staff, see the offices and ask questions. You need to make sure that you have chosen a physician with a solid record with whom you feel you can place your trust.

Before-and-After Photos. These photos can really show a certain physician's style and give you a good idea as to what type of results specific procedures can deliver. We recommend before-and-after photos as a means to help educate yourself with regard to surgical possibilities, but it is also important to remember that no surgical results can be perfectly duplicated.

Social Media Sites. More and more websites encourage real-time interactivity and contain user-generated content. Physicians are getting on Facebook to keep in

touch with their patients and share their story with an expanded audience online. They're also blogging about news and developments in the cosmetic surgery field. Patients themselves are using sites like Real Self to ask questions and hear from others who have had cosmetic treatments. It's a good idea to keep in mind that the opinions and perspectives you find on social media sites are just that – not necessarily 100% accurate and reliable information. Consider the source when determining the value of the advice you come across on social media sites.

Example of a Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/MarinaPlasticSurgeryAssociates

Example of a blog:

www.beverlyhillsplasticsurgeryinsider.com

So, who can you believe online? Here is a list of resources we trust...

The ASPS

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons offers online resources for both the physician and the patient.

www.plasticsurgery.org

The ASAPS

The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery delivers news on the latest developments in cosmetic surgery.

www.surgery.org

Plastic Surgery Financing

A private site dedicated to educating potential patients about financing plastic surgery.

www.financing-plastic-surgery.com

Breast Health Online

A website founded by a community of women committed to breast health.

www.breasthealthonline.com

The ABPS

The American Board of Plastic Surgery

The ISAPS

International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery

WORTH 1000 WORDS

You know the famous saying: a picture is worth a thousand words. This axiom couldn't be more true than when researching cosmetic or plastic surgery or treatments for yourself. When you begin to explore different techniques, procedures and physicians, you will have the opportunity to look at before-and-after photos that show patient improvement and surgeon results, as well as the benefits or limitations to certain procedures. Think of them as a tool for visual communication.

While photographs can be a powerful tool for understanding procedures and possibilities, it is important to remember that results can never be perfectly duplicated.

Understand What a Procedure Can or Can't Do. In before-and-after photographs you can clearly see what a procedure can or can't do. You begin to understand what BOTOX® Cosmetic can do, what a chemical peel can do, and what a facelift can do. All three of these treatments reduce wrinkles, but each does so in a different way, to a different extent, and sometimes to different parts of the face. You will begin to understand the difference between an eyelid lift and a forehead lift. In addition, you will more clearly understand what each treatment can't do – which is equally important.

Get a Feel For a Physician's Surgical Style. Make sure you view your physician's before-and-after photographs. While all surgeons have attended medical school and are licensed under their state's rules and regulations, not every surgeon has the same education, experience, capabilities or style. Surgeons sometimes have preferred procedures and techniques and often these will be apparent in their patient "after photos." Take breast augmentation for example.

WORTH 1000 WORDS

While comparing the different before-and-after photographs from various surgeons you may begin to notice that one surgeon's patients tend to have results with similar size or proportions. Not every patient has the same goals; and while the surgeons you consider may all be very gifted and experienced, you may feel more drawn to one style over another. This is especially prevalent in rhinoplasty and breast augmentations.

Bring In Photos That Show What You Like. When you are ready to have a consultation with a cosmetic or plastic surgeon you can bring photos to show what you like and your goals, as well as what you don't like. This will illustrate your expectations to your surgeon. It can also open a dialogue between you and your physician to ensure that what you want is realistic – one of the most important aspects of cosmetic surgery treatments. You want a physician to be truthful with you, not promise you the impossible.

While photographs can be a powerful tool for understanding procedures starting a conversation about possibilities, they have their limitations as well. Photos, particularly from print media, can be altered and not representative of a real person. Ask to see the results of real patients, read actual stories about patient experiences and ask to speak with specific real people.

Use photos as one of your learning tools. But remember that no surgeon can promise to deliver exact results you may see in a magazine or on the Internet. Remember to have an open, honest discussion with your physician about the range of results possible for you.

FINDING THE RIGHT SURGEON

Do not be fooled: any physician can call themselves a cosmetic surgeon, but that does not mean that they are a board-certified plastic surgeon, that they specialize in plastic surgery or that they even have experience performing intricate plastic surgery procedures. So, how can you know you are getting an experienced, knowledgeable and certified plastic surgeon?

Look For Certification from Reputable Boards

In order to distinguish doctors with specific education and extensive plastic surgery experience, several boards and societies exist to help patients find the most qualified surgeon. The American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS) oversees the training of American plastic surgeons. When your surgeon says that he or she is board certified it does not necessarily mean ABPS certified, so be sure to check.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) is the only board out of 24 approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties to certify physicians in both facial and body plastic surgery. Created to help protect patients, the ASPS regulates the quality of medical education, designating qualifying requirements, regulating comprehensive exams and presenting certification to those who meet the established requirements.

FINDING THE RIGHT SURGEON

While certification from a reputable board can immediately tell you that a surgeon has met specific requirements, you should still ask any surgeon you are considering questions about:

- **Their Training.** Learn where they went to medical school and performed their residency. Look for a surgeon who constantly expands their education and improves their skills, or one who has trained with other experts in their field.
- **Their Hospital Privileges.** Where is the surgeon permitted to perform surgery? Your doctor's hospital privileges let you know that he or she is in good standing with the local hospital and has met their requirements of conduct and training.
- **Their Memberships.** Professional organizations and medical societies often have their own criteria for accepting physicians as well, such as ethical conduct, board certification, or specializations.

Your doctor should be proud of his or her schooling and will often prominently display diplomas, certifications and memberships. If you do not see any of these in the office, ask. And don't be afraid to ask very specific questions. Most doctors enjoy sharing their accomplishments with their patients.

FINDING THE RIGHT SURGEON

About Dr. Grant Stevens

Dr. Grant Stevens has been practicing medicine for 27 years, focusing on cosmetic surgery for 20 years. A graduate with honors from Washington University Medical School in St. Louis where he was awarded the Senior Prize in Surgery, Dr. Stevens completed his general surgery training at Harbor UCLA Medical Center, then returned to Washington University-Barnes Hospital where he completed a fellowship in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He is a Board Certified Diplomate of The American Board of Plastic Surgery and a Fellow of The American College of Surgeons and The International College of Surgeons. He was appointed by the Governor to The Medical Board of California Medical Quality Review Board, and is on the Plastic Surgery Faculty at UCLA as well as USC. Dr. Stevens has been an invited visiting professor at Loma Linda University, The University of Switzerland, The University of Denmark, and USC.

Dr. Stevens is the Medical Director of Plastic Surgery Associates in Marina del Rey and Palos Verdes. He specializes in cosmetic plastic surgery and has been named one of America's Best Physicians in "The Guide to Top Doctors." He is an active member at the Centinella- Freeman Marina Hospital where he is the past Chairman of The Department of Surgery, the past Chairman of the Liposuction Committee, and the past co-director of The Breast Center. He is also on staff at St. John's Medical Center and the Marina Outpatient Surgery Center. Dr. Stevens is Director of the Marina Aesthetic Surgery Fellowship, one of just a few fellowships in the U.S. approved by the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.

Throughout his career, Dr. Stevens has authored many dozen publications and given scores of presentations in national and international settings. Learn more at www.marinaplasticsurgery.com/cv.cfm.

THE SURGICAL SETTING

The word “surgery” often conjures up visions of hospitals, but ambulatory settings – surgical sites not in hospitals – are becoming more common. This is due to three things: medical advancements, technological advancements, and economical benefits. As few as one in five cosmetic surgery procedures are performed in a hospital. So, to which will you go? That is to be determined by your procedure, current condition, surgeon, insurance plan, and you.

The Location

Ambulatory settings, commonly referred to as surgical centers or outpatient centers, have gained popularity for many reasons, the first of which is that they are far less expensive than hospitals. In addition, most ambulatory settings have been created with the patient’s comfort and convenience in mind. Physicians have gone out of their way to create ambulatory settings that are beautiful and warm, forgoing the austere, cold environment of a typical hospital. Most ambulatory settings have a better ratio of staff to patients so that the staff can be more attentive.

In order to determine an ambulatory surgical center’s safety, make sure that it is accredited by a reputable organization. Accreditation agencies develop rigorous criteria that all centers must pass to ensure patient safety. Typically, these standards govern the layout of the facility, safety procedures and enforcement, and patient care as well as quality control programs to ensure the center maintains a high level of performance. You can call one of these three highly respected agencies to verify the accreditation of your surgical center:

THE SURGICAL SETTING

1. The American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (AAAASF)

www.aaaasf.org

(888) 545-5222

2. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

www.jointcommission.org

(630) 792-5000

3. The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC)

www.aaahc.org

(847) 853-6060

An accreditation by any of these agencies assures that programs, policies and staff are in place for optimal care and treatment.

Dr. Grant Stevens Inducted into the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery

Not all procedures are performed on an outpatient basis. Some procedures or patients require a hospital setting. And other procedures, while not requiring an overnight stay in the hospital, may still require a hospital location. Talk to your doctor to determine the best setting for your procedure.

THE SURGICAL SETTING

In addition to your surgeon, there are other key players who will be present at your surgery. The type and number of assisting staff will depend on the procedure performed but can include:

- assisting nurse and recovery room nurse
- assisting staff
- anesthesiologist or nurse anesthesiologist
- esthetician (for non-surgical procedures)

Dr. Stevens performs most procedures at Marina Outpatient Surgery Center, but also has hospital privileges at St. John's Medical Center, and Centinella-Freeman Marina Hospital. All facilities are fully accredited.

FEES & FINANCING

There is no set cost for specific procedures – cost is determined by surgical method or technique, ambulatory setting, staff required, anesthesia and the patient’s current physical condition. There are many different avenues people can take in order to finance their surgery.

All cosmetic surgeries begin with a pre-operative consultation. This gives the surgeon a chance to meet you, discover what you would like to change or enhance and to hear about your expectations or goals. At the consultation, you can ask any questions you may have about the procedure, and the doctor can find out more about your medical history and current state of health. After determining the best procedure to fit your needs, as well as addressing any unique requirements you may have, you will be given an estimate for surgical costs.

At Marina Plastic Surgery, we work with many insurance companies and we offer financing options.

Insurance Companies

Many insurance companies do not cover elective cosmetic procedures, but they do cover reconstruction procedures, such as breast reductions and functional nasal reconstructions. Those that do offer coverage may place restrictions on what is covered as well as ambulatory settings or length of time covered in the hospital. Check with your insurance provider to determine what your coverage handles.

FEES & FINANCING

Financing

We understand that just coming to the decision to have plastic or cosmetic surgery is a big step for many people. Once you have made the decision we want to help you make your dreams a reality. Needing to take out a loan for surgery is very common. While we don't offer direct financing, we can help you apply for a loan, as well as work with your financial institution to provide needed information in order to get the loan procedures started.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

While the decision to have plastic surgery is very personal and unique for each patient, there is a common “chain of events” that people go through leading up to the decision. It usually starts with disappointment or frustration about a physical attribute – this could be a physical deformity, the way your body or skin is aging, the shape of a feature, or the balance of features put together. Then there is hope when you begin to believe there may be something you can do. Finally, there is realization that there are treatments that have worked well for others just like you. The excitement begins to grow.

Possibilities to Actualities

While the possibilities for improvement or enhancement may seem endless to one person, they may seem difficult to imagine for another. For either type of person, the key is to have realistic expectations.

The more you understand both the strengths and weaknesses of any type of procedure, the more clearly you can make your decision regarding treatment and create realistic expectations for your surgery. Your doctor or the staff can help you clearly understand what can be improved by which method and what type of results to expect.

YOUR CONSULTATION

All cosmetic surgeries and some non-invasive procedures include a pre-treatment consultation. At the consultation, Dr. Stevens will provide you with the required information so as to ensure that you are fully informed going into the surgery. However, the consultation is also the perfect time to ask any questions you may have. Some people have questions they have been wondering about for some time, while others may not even know what to ask. So, how should you prepare for the consultation?

What to Bring

Dr. Stevens will want to know about your current health condition as well as your medical history. Bring your records to help provide the most thorough amount of information – including allergies, prior surgeries, illnesses and the medical history of your immediate family. We recommend bringing any photos that you may have that illustrate your goals or expectations for the treatment.

What to Ask

In addition, the consultation is the perfect time for you to ask Dr. Stevens questions about his background and about the procedure, including information about possible risks or complications.

About the Doctor: You'll want to make sure that the surgeon has had a lot of experience performing the procedure you are interested in. Find out how many of these procedures he or she has performed and how often they perform them. Ask to see patient before-and-after photos. Ask if there are patients you can talk to who have had the procedure you are interested in.

About the Procedure: Find out exactly what happens during the procedure. What technique will be used? Are there newer techniques that you should know about? Will you have incisions? Where? What type of sutures will you have and will they require a separate visit for removal? Will you have anesthesia? What kind? Are there side effects

YOUR CONSULTATION

with the anesthesia? How long will the surgery take? Where will it be performed? If you are interested in having more than one type of procedure performed ask if the procedures can be combined into a single surgery.

About Recovery: How much pain or discomfort should you expect afterwards? How will it be treated? How many days will you need to be away from work? Will your movement be limited? If yes, for how long? Will you require special dressings, bandages or garments? How noticeable will your surgery be to others? Should you avoid certain activities? If yes, for how long?

About Results: When will results be visible? How long will results last? What will and won't be affected? Will you need follow-up treatments? What if you need a touch-up treatment or modification?

About Risks and Complications: What are the types of possible risks and the percentage of people who experience complications? What are side effects? Ask your physician to tell you about previous complications he has experienced in the past. While not a comfortable question, you should expect an honest answer.

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

The decision to have cosmetic surgery is a decision to feel better about yourself. So what can you do leading up to the day of the surgery to help support your decision? Mentally, it's good to have all of your questions answered and to have sufficient information about the procedure to make you comfortable. Physically, there are many things you can do as well.

Good Health

It is important to be in good physical health before any surgical procedure. If you have diabetes or are immune-compromised in any way, you should get both under control before your treatment. Both can slow-down the healing process and a compromised immune system can make you more susceptible to infection. Talk to your physician ahead of time to find out if there are steps you can take to control either of these disorders.

Stop Smoking

You probably think you understand all of the hazards of smoking. And while everyday side-effects are well known, the surgical side-effects are very serious. Smoking can cause complications both in surgery as well as during the recovery process. People who smoke have a tougher time under anesthesia. Also, smoking restricts blood vessels, making it very difficult for your cells to receive the oxygen that they need during surgery. Likewise, not having enough oxygen can slow down the healing process, hampering your body's ability to recover.

If you smoke, it is recommended that you quit smoking a month before your surgery. If you have difficulties quitting smoking, talk to your doctor about treatments or help that you can get.

Avoid Certain Foods, Drugs and Medications

Over-the-counter drugs that include aspirin can thin the blood which can cause difficulties in surgery. You will be asked to refrain from aspirin, aspirin-containing

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

products, vitamin E, and St. John's Wort up to two weeks before your treatment. Ibuprofen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories should not be taken in the two days leading up to surgery. Some treatments may require avoidance of other drugs, vitamins or minerals. Dr. Stevens will give you a complete list of foods and products to avoid.

Personal Preparation

To make your recovery as pleasant as possible, it is good to prepare your home and lifestyle beforehand. Your doctor can suggest many conveniences that may help you, depending on your treatment. For people who have operations that temporarily limit what they can reach or pick up, moving needed objects from tall cupboards or shelves to waist height can be very helpful.

You will need somebody to drive you home when you are released after your treatment. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home if you have been under anesthesia or other types of pharmaceuticals. Also, we recommend having someone with you for the first 24 to 48 hours after your surgery.

The Day of Your Surgery

To make the day of your surgery go as smoothly as possible, be sure to have followed all of your physician's pre-operative rules or guidelines. Arrive at the surgery center bathed, but do not wear any make-up or perfumes.

RISKS & COMPLICATIONS

All surgeries come with some level of risk or chance for complications, although the chances are very low. It is important for you to be fully informed before your treatment and your doctor will go over possible complications with you in full detail during your consultation. This is also the time to ask them any questions you may still have.

Closely follow all pre- and post-operative instructions given to you by Dr. Stevens and his staff. If you have been asked to avoid certain foods, medicines, drugs, vitamins or minerals, do so. If you are told to wear a compression garment or refrain from certain activities after the treatment, follow these instructions. They are made with your safety in mind as well as to help your recovery go as smoothly as possible. Read page 24 for more information on how to prepare for surgery and page 29 to more fully understand what to expect during recovery.

Scars

There is no such thing as “scarless” surgery. If there is an incision, there will be a scar. Dr. Stevens takes great care to place incisions in the most discreet places whenever possible.

Each individual will scar differently. Some people will heal with barely a trace of an incision mark while others may be susceptible to darker or raised scars. A minority of people may develop keloid scars (bumpy scar tissue that sometimes requires revision).

Scars have a long healing cycle. You will see remarkable changes in your scars in the first 3 months, but you will not know what a scar will ultimately look like for 12 to 24 months after surgery. Scars take a long time to mature. So, while scars slowly become less and less noticeable, it is important to remember that it may take a year or two before your scar has completed its healing cycle.

RECOVERY

Recovery is an important part of the cosmetic or plastic surgery experience. It's important to take good care of yourself, allowing yourself enough downtime and not pushing too hard to get back into your normal activities. As medicine continues to improve through new technologies and techniques, surgery becomes less traumatic for the body and people are able to recover more quickly. Still, you need to give your body the correct amount of time and rest before you resume all levels of activities.

The recovery process begins as soon as the surgery ends. If you had surgery under general anesthesia, don't be surprised if you are very cold when you first awake. The nurse will wrap you in a warming blanket to help fight any chills. If you are having an outpatient procedure – where you get to go home the same day – you may need to stay at the doctor's office or surgery center for a couple of hours.

When you are released, you will need a friend or family member to drive you home, as you will not be able to drive yourself home. We also recommend having someone stay with you for the first 24 to 48 hours.

What you need to do during your recovery will depend on the procedure. Here are some basic guidelines.

Basic Guidelines

If your procedure takes place above the shoulders (neck, head, face), keep your head elevated for several days, even when you are sleeping. This will help minimize swelling or bruising.

If your procedure requires a compression bandage or garment, make sure to keep it on for the full duration. Your body needs extra support and the bandage or garment will help minimize swelling.

RECOVERY

If your procedure involved your skin you may need to stay out of the sun or wear extensive sun block for several weeks.

Your physician will let you know when you'll be able to bathe, wear makeup, do light activities and participate in more strenuous activities. You may feel as though you are an exceptionally strong and resilient person, but you still need to give yourself the gift of time and rest when it comes to recovery. Take it easy. Take it slowly. Treat yourself kindly and, before you know it, you'll be back to all your normal activities.

Cosmetic surgery procedures can help you look better and feel better about yourself. Many people say that it helps them look on the outside how they feel on the inside. Others say that it gives them the self-confidence that they have been lacking or the courage to be more true to themselves. Each person is unique and will have their reasons for having a treatment. But, once you've had the treatment, it is important to continue to treat yourself kindly and with great care. Continue to follow age-defying activities such as getting enough rest, lowering stress and eating healthy. Follow your doctor's instructions. And get ready for many, many compliments on the "new you" – the you that has been waiting to come out for so long.

MAINTAINING YOUR RESULT

If you have made the decision to have a cosmetic procedure, why not support it with a healthier lifestyle? Your actions can help the procedure last longer, ensuring a vibrant, healthy, happy vision of you.

Slowing Down the Aging Process

Many people seek cosmetic or plastic surgery in order to “turn back the hands of time” or to at least help them age more gracefully. While plastic surgery can’t stop the aging process, it can slow it down quite a bit, especially with some help from you.

Protect Yourself From the Sun. The sun ages skin faster than anything else. By breaking down collagen and drying out skin, sun damage causes sagging and wrinkles to flourish. In addition, sun damage can create unsightly skin pigmentation irregularities from sun spots to skin cancer.

Drink Plenty of Water. Our bodies are made up of water and our cells need ample water in order to stay healthy and function properly. Keeping your body properly hydrated allows the body and organs to function better and it also greatly influences your skin. From hydrating dry, chapped lips to preventing fine lines and wrinkles, drinking enough water can help to battle many signs of aging.

Reduce Stress. This is probably one of the most important subjects in health right now. Stress has been shown to tax all of the body’s organs including the heart, but it also wears away a vibrant face. If you are stressed out chances are your brows are knitted together or your face is scowling. The last thing you need is a matrix of wrinkles on your beautiful face. Take preemptive measures to reduce stress and learn tools that help you cope better. A happier you makes for a younger-looking you.

MAINTAINING YOUR RESULT

Give Yourself the Gift of Sleep. Sleep is an important part of our daily lives, but many people are not getting enough of it. From hectic lifestyles and crazy working hours to family obligations and incessant insomnia, many things can rob us of needed sleep hours. Sleep allows your body to recharge, makes you more alert and sharp during the day, and helps you cope with daily stresses as they happen. If you are burning the candle at both ends, look for ways that you can cut back on certain activities so that you can get an extra hour of shut eye. If you have insomnia, talk to your medical professional about available treatments.

Eat a Healthy Diet and Maintain a Healthy Weight. Being overweight makes people look older than they are. On top of that, weight gain can stretch out skin and tax the body – all things that can age us prematurely. Being at a healthy weight and eating right allows our bodies to function properly. Good nutrition helps to ensure that our bodies are getting the fuel, vitamins and minerals that they need.

THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. If you have questions about plastic surgery, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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For more information about cosmetic enhancement, visit:

www.marinaplasticsurgery.com

www.marinamedspa.com

www.gummybearbreastimplants.com

www.freeze-thefat.com

www.coolsculptinglosangeles.com

www.marinamanland.com

And be sure to check out our social media sites:

www.facebook.com/MarinaPlasticSurgeryAssociates

www.beverlyhillspasticsurgeryinsider.com