

**Media contacts listed at bottom.
National trends chart available upon request.**

‘Body Contouring’ Surgery on the Rise Locally, Nationally

FREDERICKSBURG, VA., March 3, 2006 – Weight loss surgery is gaining in popularity. As a result, requests for “body contouring” plastic surgery are also on the rise, report physicians with Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg.

Patients who have lost massive amounts of weight following gastric bypasses and related procedures sometimes are left with large skin folds that exercise alone cannot resolve. These patients are turning to plastic surgeons to tighten their skin, freeing them to lead active, healthier and more confident lives.

Drs. L. Thomas Albert, Howard Heppe and Harold Bautista with Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg have helped growing numbers of massive weight loss patients in recent years, says Lesi Beamon Mackey, the group’s practice administrator. Their experiences reflect national trends.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) estimates that 55,927 body contouring procedures for massive weight loss were performed nationwide in 2004, a 7% increase over 2003. ASPS statistics also indicate that 76% of all upper arm lifts and thigh lifts are performed following massive weight loss. The group plans to release 2005 statistics sometime in March.

While many of these patients lost weight following gastric bypasses and related procedures, some shed their pounds through long-term dieting and exercise.

Local Patients Benefit

Cherri Notarnicola of Orange, Virginia, lost 150 pounds following gastric bypass surgery in February 2003. Despite an active lifestyle that includes horseback riding competition, Ms. Notarnicola could not firm up the excess skin that remained around her abdomen, lower body and face. Dr. Heppe performed a lower body lift in November 2003 that Ms. Notarnicola says removed six pounds of excess skin. That procedure was followed by a facelift in November 2005. “It made the difference. Before, I could say ‘I lost the weight.’ But now I can say, ‘Wow, I look great.’”

Delia Arnold of Stafford, Virginia lost 145 pounds after gastric bypass surgery in 2001. Her goal was to become a healthy mother to her two younger children, whom she adopted seven years ago. After the weight loss, however, exercise remained difficult due to leftover skin. She had trouble lifting her arms even to comb her hair, she says. Dr. Albert performed arm lifts on Ms. Arnold in July 2004 and July 2005. Now she can ride bikes with her kids, take long walks and jump on the trampoline outside her home. “It’s been a tremendous thing,” Ms. Arnold says.

Mark Eldert of Spotsylvania, Virginia lost 156 pounds through dieting and exercise a decade ago, later gaining back half of the weight. He became too thin at his lowest weight, Mr. Eldert says, in a fruitless quest to exercise away excess skin around his midsection. In October 2005, Dr. Bautista removed 10 pounds of skin from Mr. Eldert's abdomen, liposuctioned his flanks and reduced excess chest tissue. "It has really helped my self-esteem," says Mr. Eldert, who continues to exercise regularly and felt confident enough to take off his shirt poolside on a recent cruise.

Body Contouring Procedures

Fredericksburg's plastic surgeons say procedures typically performed for body contouring after massive weight loss can include one or more of the following:

- Upper arm lifts
- Thigh lifts
- Tummy tucks
- Breast lifts
- Breast reductions
- Body lifts (a combination of procedures)
- Face lifts

About Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg

Since 1983, Plastic Surgery Services of Fredericksburg (PSSF) has been the premier provider of cosmetic surgery in the Fredericksburg, Virginia, area, south of Washington, D.C. Its surgeons are Board Certified and dedicated to achieving superior results through their team approach to patient care. They employ state-of-the-art equipment and techniques in their accredited medical facility located at 3312 Fall Hill Avenue. For more information, please call (540) 371-7730 or visit www.plasticsurgeryservices.com.

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