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OCTOBER 2008 \$5.95

SPECIAL TRAVEL ISSUE!

THE RADAR BEAUTY

BY HOLLY MORSE CALDWELL



TIME PREVENTION: The newest generations of Washington women are making some smooth moves.

ABOVE THE CUT? *In a city bent on saving the world, self-preservation is becoming DC's latest cause*

Washingtonians have long looked down their au naturel noses at L.A. and NYC's skin-deep obsessions. So there may be a bit of Schadenfreude for those on the coasts now discovering that DC's bright young things are hardly above moving the needle—or laser, for that matter.

"The difference is women in DC just don't talk about it," says Dr. Philip Schoenfeld, plastic surgeon and founder of Renu MedSpa in Chevy Chase. "Washingtonians have a more sophisticated style. They're not above a trip to the plastic surgeon's office, it's just that they want a more subtle improvement or change. It's the difference between Jackie O and Pam Anderson."

Gone are the days of the massive midlife surgical overhaul, which also meant some serious downtime. Like that time grandma went away on that three-week trip to Europe, returning refreshed and looking at least 10 years younger. But now, in an age of working, playing and living at warp speed, women don't want to wait—not for a protracted recovery time or for surgery once wrinkles and creases take up residence. It's this sense of urgency that fuels today's \$60-billion plastic surgery and dermatology industry.

"It's no longer enough to turn back the hands of time. We would like to just stop them altogether," says one 41-year-old Spring Valley marketing consultant who's been getting Botox injections religiously since the birth of her son, five years ago. "It just seemed like the right time. Once the wrinkles are there, it's much harder to get rid of them."

With the decade-old mainstay of injectable age-reversers such as Botox, Restylane and Juvederm, Washington women of a certain age quietly, albeit readily, lined up for these promise-filled syringes. But walk into any top

plastic surgeon's or dermatologist's office in DC today and the waiting room is decidedly younger. "I would say 40 percent of our business is women in their late-20s to mid-40s," says Dr. Cole Brown, plastic surgeon at Bruno and Brown in Chevy Chase. "Starting earlier gives them a big long-term advantage."

The ubiquitous thought among the younger set—though still kept as secret as an intern affair—is to stop the wrinkles before they start. "It's all about prevention," says Brown. "Advances in the industry have allowed for less invasive procedures using Intense Pulsed Light laser treatments that help to slough off the surface cells, penetrate the deeper layers and build up collagen under the skin." Chemical peels, a mainstay of skin resurfacing, are growing in popularity among the youngest clientele as well.

"The fractional-beam lasers, on the other hand, resurface the skin with less downtime, but more visits," continues Dr. Brown. "The traditional full-beam ablative lasers are making a big comeback with refined technology that allows for more focused treatments in the office."

Always a town looking to balance the budget, the affordable nature of today's procedures adds to the attraction for the hoards of hot moms taking an offensive stand against visibly aging. Compared with the \$20K surgeries of yesteryear, you don't have to wait to have amassed your fortune to have these procedures. The treatments range from \$400 for a Botox visit to \$3,000 for some of the more intense laser treatments.

So much for youth being wasted on the young. ■

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