



PLASTIC SURGERY
ASSOCIATES

FACELIFT OPTIONS

at Plastic Surgery Associates
of Grand Rapids, Michigan

About Plastic Surgery Associates of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Since 1987, Plastic Surgery Associates has provided the Grand Rapids community with surgical excellence rooted in transparency and patient safety. The practice is led by four board-certified plastic surgeons who combine high-level clinical training with an individualized approach to every case. Instead of following standard protocols, the team prioritizes a thorough understanding of each patient's anatomy and lifestyle before recommending a course of action. This commitment to authentic results and patient empowerment is the foundation of their Go Confidently™ philosophy.

Operating from a state-of-the-art, AAAHC-accredited facility in downtown Grand Rapids, the practice offers a full range of procedures for the face, breast, body, and hand. Beyond surgery, patients have access to advanced regenerative skin care and medical-grade products at Grand Pearl MedSpa. By offering surgical expertise and professional skin health in one location, Plastic Surgery Associates provides a beneficial service for every patient.



MEET THE TEAM

Every surgeon at Plastic Surgery Associates brings a distinct background and area of expertise, but they share a common standard: rigorous training, active involvement in their field, and an investment in each patient's outcome. From craniofacial fellowships at Harvard to dual board certification and international microsurgical study, the depth of experience across the team means patients have access to specialized skills regardless of the procedure they are pursuing.

About Marguerite E. Aitken



Marguerite E. Aitken

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

Dr. Marguerite Aitken is a board-certified plastic surgeon who specializes in cosmetic breast surgery, body contouring, and facial aesthetics. Before her medical career, she spent ten years as a medical illustrator, an experience that developed her eye for detail and anatomical symmetry. Even after changing canvases, her blend of expertise speaks for itself.

Her training includes international microsurgical study in Belgium and specialized programs across the country focused on facial surgery and body contouring. A graduate of Northwestern University, Dr. Aitken has been recognized as one of "America's Top Surgeons." She is known for a thoughtful, compassionate approach and a dedication to achieving naturally refined results for every patient.

About Johanna R. Krebiehl



Johanna R. Krebiehl

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

Dr. Johanna Krebiehl is a board-certified plastic surgeon who specializes in complex hand surgery and microsurgical reconstruction, as well as aesthetic procedures of the breast and body. A native of Michigan, she graduated with high distinction from Wayne State University and completed her residency in Grand Rapids before pursuing a fellowship at the University of Southern California.

Dr. Krebiehl is highly regarded for her ability to manage intricate reconstructive cases with technical accuracy and empathy. She takes a personalized approach to care, building strong professional relationships with her patients. Her practice is built on a foundation of clinical excellence and a commitment to helping patients navigate their surgical journey with confidence.



John D. Renucci

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

About John D. Renucci

Dr. John Renucci holds dual board certification and is recognized for his contributions to aesthetic breast and body surgery. His background includes Columbia University and the University of Chicago, along with advanced fellowships in both cosmetic and microsurgery at the Cleveland Clinic.

Dr. Renucci is known for incorporating science-driven innovation into his surgical techniques and skin care philosophy. As the founder of TURO Skin, he brings a modern perspective to the practice, focusing on precision and aesthetic leadership. His goal is to provide patients with refined outcomes through the use of the most current surgical advancements.



Douglas L. Vander Woude

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

About Douglas L. Vander Woude

Dr. Douglas Vander Woude is a board-certified plastic surgeon with a reputation for surgical precision and a calm, patient-centered approach. After completing his training at the University of Michigan and Harvard Medical School, he served as a faculty member at Harvard following a specialized craniofacial fellowship.

In clinical practice, Dr. Vander Woude focuses on achieving balance across a wide range of breast and body procedures. He prioritizes open communication, ensuring that every surgical plan is an accurate reflection of the patient's personal goals. His work at Plastic Surgery Associates is defined by a deep respect for anatomical harmony and long-term results.



Understanding Facial Aging

Facial aging is a gradual process caused by changes happening beneath the surface of the skin. Over time, the skin loses collagen and elastin, the structural proteins responsible for firmness and recoil, leading to skin laxity across the cheeks, jawline, and neck. At the same time, the fat pads that give the face its fullness begin to shrink and descend, hollowing certain areas while creating heaviness in others. The underlying facial muscles also weaken and shift, contributing to a flattening of contours that once felt defined. As the jawline loses its structure, the distinction between the face and neck becomes less defined, and jowling often develops along the lower face.

For most patients, it is the combination of these changes that creates the appearance of significant aging, and understanding that is an important part of developing a surgical plan that actually addresses the root causes rather than just the surface.



Creating a Natural Facelift at Plastic Surgery Associates

The goal of a modern facelift is not to make someone look like they have had surgery. It is to restore what has changed. At Plastic Surgery Associates, the surgical approach is focused on structural repositioning rather than just skin removal, which has been known to produce the tight, pulled appearance patients want to avoid. By addressing the deeper layers of facial tissue and fat, our surgeons can create results that move naturally, age gracefully, and look like a well-rested version of the patient rather than a different person altogether. Every plan is made around the individual's anatomy, the degree of change they are experiencing, and the outcome they are hoping to achieve.

The primary facelift approach offered at Plastic Surgery Associates is the traditional facelift. Using longer incisions carefully placed within the natural contours of the hairline and around the ear, this technique allows our surgeons to access and reposition the deeper facial structures responsible for significant laxity and volume change. It is the preferred option for patients experiencing more advanced signs of aging along the lower face, jawline, and neck.

Patients can expect reduced skin laxity, improved jawline definition, a smoother neck contour, and a refreshed overall appearance, all achieved through precise surgical technique and a commitment to natural, lasting results.





Traditional Facelift

A traditional facelift is best for patients experiencing more advanced signs of aging, particularly significant skin laxity in the lower face and deep creases along the neck. This procedure goes beyond the surface by repositioning the deeper connective tissues and muscles, also known as the SMAS layer. By lifting these foundational structures first, our surgeons can effectively restore the jawline and neck without creating a tight or pulled appearance.

The procedure is performed under general anesthesia in our AAAHC-accredited surgical center. Incisions are carefully hidden in the natural contours of the hairline and around the ear to make sure they are discreet once healed. During the surgery, excess skin is removed, and underlying fat is often repositioned to restore volume to the cheeks and midface.

Recovery typically requires about 2 weeks of downtime before returning to social activities or work. While initial swelling and bruising peak within the first few days, the most significant refinement occurs over the first month. A traditional facelift provides long-lasting results that usually remain visible for a decade or more as the face continues to age naturally. Most patients find the procedure helps them look about ten years younger.

SCHEDULE APPOINTMENT

Week-By-Week Recovery

The First 24 Hours: Personalized Support

Your recovery begins with an elevated level of care designed for safety and comfort. Plastic Surgery Associates provides complimentary overnight stays in the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel for our facelift patients, where you are monitored by our clinical team. The following morning, you will have an appointment with your surgeon and the clinical staff to remove dressings, check your progress, and ensure you are comfortable before heading home.

Week 1: Focus on Rest

During the first week, you will notice swelling, bruising, and a tight sensation around the jaw and neck. It is essential to keep your head elevated at all times, even while sleeping, to help fluid drain. You will likely feel most tired during days 3 and 4 when swelling peaks. We recommend light walking around the house to support circulation, but all strenuous activity must be avoided.

Week 2: Initial Refinement

By the second week, most patients see a significant decrease in

bruising. Any remaining discoloration can usually be camouflaged with makeup once your surgeon clears you to use it. This is typically when sutures are removed during a follow-up visit. Most patients feel ready to return to desk work and light daily errands by the end of this week.

Weeks 3–4: Returning to Routine

At this stage, you will begin to see your new contours appearing as the bulk of the swelling subsides. You may still experience some lingering numbness around the ears or jawline, which is a normal part of the healing process as the nerves adjust and settle. You can gradually reintroduce light exercise, such as brisk walking, but you should continue to avoid heavy lifting or high-impact workouts.

Week 6 and Beyond: Final Results

By the 6-week mark, most restrictions are lifted. Your incisions will continue to fade and soften over the next several months. While you will look refreshed early on, the final settling of the tissues and the complete resolution of subtle swelling can take 3 to 6 months, at which point your final results will be fully visible.

Post-Op Benefits at Plastic Surgery Associates of Grand Rapids, Michigan

We believe that a successful outcome depends as much on the recovery as it does on the surgery itself. Our patients benefit from a full scope of post-operative care, starting with our board-certified anesthesiologists who prioritize your safety during the procedure. Our seven private recovery rooms and one-on-one nursing care ensure that your transition out of surgery is calm, professional, and supportive. With our dedicated post-care hub and accessible patient portal, you are never without guidance as you heal.

Who Is a Good Candidate for a Traditional Facelift?

A traditional facelift is best suited for patients experiencing moderate to significant signs of facial aging. During your consultation, our board-certified surgeons will evaluate your anatomy and goals to confirm this is the right approach for you. Ideal candidates typically share one or more of the following characteristics:

- Significant skin laxity across the lower face, jawline, or neck
- Deep nasolabial folds or prominent jowling
- Loss of definition between the face and neck
- Descended or displaced facial fat pads
- Visible banding or sagging in the neck
- A desire for long-lasting, natural-looking rejuvenation



Facelift vs. Non-Surgical Options

Non-surgical treatments like neuromodulators (BOTOX®, Jeuveau®), facial fillers, and skin-tightening devices can be effective for early or mild signs of aging. They work well for softening fine lines, restoring lost volume in targeted areas, and improving overall skin quality. For patients in the earlier stages of aging, these options can extend the time before surgery becomes necessary. They can also complement facelift results if the surgical route is deemed most appropriate.

The key difference lies in the capabilities of these treatments. Injectables and skin-tightening procedures cannot address structural changes in the deeper facial layers, reposition descended tissue, or remove excess skin. When laxity becomes significant, jowling is pronounced, or the relationship between the face and neck has changed meaningfully, surgery tends to produce more complete and longer-lasting correction.

In terms of longevity, non-surgical treatments often need to be repeated every few months to a couple of years, depending on the product. A facelift produces results that last 10 years or more. For patients who have reached a point where non-surgical options are no longer keeping pace with the changes they are seeing, a facelift consultation is a reasonable and practical next step.



Common FAQs

When should I consider a facelift?

Most patients start considering a facelift when they notice changes that non-surgical treatments can no longer adequately address. This commonly includes visible skin laxity along the cheeks and neck, jowling along the jawline, deep folds around the nose and mouth, or a general loss of facial definition. Age is less of a determining factor than anatomy and the present degree of change.

Will I look natural after a facelift?

Yes, when performed with a structural approach rather than aggressive skin removal alone, a facelift should produce a refreshed and natural result. The surgeons at Plastic Surgery Associates focus on repositioning the underlying tissue layers rather than simply pulling the skin, which is what creates the overdone appearance people want to avoid.

Are scars visible from a facelift?

At Plastic Surgery Associates, we intentionally place facelift incisions as discreetly as possible. For a traditional facelift, incisions follow the hairline at the temples, continue around the ear, and end in the lower scalp. For a limited incision facelift, incisions are shorter but follow a similar path around the ear. As healing progresses, scars fade and become less noticeable.

When can I return to work after a facelift?

Most patients feel comfortable returning to desk work and light daily activity within 2 weeks of surgery. Those with more physically demanding jobs may need additional recovery time. Your surgeon will provide specific guidance based on your procedure and how your recovery is progressing.

Can I combine other procedures with a facelift?

Yes, and many patients choose to do so. Common combinations include a brow lift, eyelid surgery (blepharoplasty), or nose reshaping, since these procedures address complementary areas of the face. Combining procedures means a single anesthesia experience and recovery period, which many patients find preferable.

Restore Your Look With a Facelift at Plastic Surgery Associates

A facelift is about matching your outward appearance to the energy you feel on the inside. At Plastic Surgery Associates, we prioritize structural repositioning over surface-level skin tightening. By addressing the deeper layers of facial tissue, our surgeons achieve a natural look that avoids a heavily operated-on appearance. Whether you are addressing jowling, neck laxity, or a loss of facial definition, we tailor every surgical plan to your specific anatomy and goals. Schedule your facelift consultation today to get started on your facial rejuvenation journey.

[SCHEDULE APPOINTMENT](#)





PLASTIC SURGERY
ASSOCIATES

PLASTIC SURGERY ASSOCIATES OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

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Hours/Schedule

By Appointment Only

MONDAY - FRIDAY

8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

CLOSED