**BALDWIN PLASTIC SURGERY**

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| |  | | --- | | **Smoking: Effects on Plastic Surgery**  While smoking is well known to be detrimental to both your health and appearance, it also causes problems for anyone undergoing plastic surgery. Many plastic surgery operations raise up the skin and decrease or cut off part of its blood supply. In addition, deeper tissues are traumatized and need to heal.  The nicotine from tobacco causes blood vessels, particularly small ones, to constrict. This  decreases the amount of oxygen to the very tissues that need it to heal. In addition to its healing power, oxygen also helps to fight infection as well as being important in delivering important medications like antibiotics to the surgery site. Apart from the surgery site, smoking clogs the lungs and increases risk of lung infection such as pneumonia after surgery.  While smoking negatively affects all plastic surgery, there are some procedures that are at particular risk. These procedures include face lifts, tummy tucks, breast reductions and the use of tissue flaps in reconstructive surgery. Real and significant wound healing problems will occur if one has not quit smoking before and after surgery during the critical healing periods.  Therefore, Dr. Baldwin has a very specific recommendation for smoking before and after plastic surgery.  Ideally, one should quit completely. However, this is not going to happen for some patients. It is recommended that a patient avoid smoking for at least 3 weeks before and after surgery. Should you violate this recommendation, you do so at your own risk for creating complications for your surgery.  For those considering facial plastic surgery, be aware that smoking not only ages you prematurely but will make the results of facial surgery less effective. Due to the constriction of blood flow and the increase of free radicals, smoking decreases the skin’s elasticity. (leading to earlier sagging and wrinkling of the skin) The constant repeated “puckering” action involved in puffing on a cigarette is  also a major cause of lines and wrinkles around the mouth and causes the lips to thin.  In short, if you are considering plastic surgery, you need to view this as the perfect time to quit smoking. Besides the obvious and well known risks to your health, smoking increases the risk of surgical complications Since you are exposing yourself to surgery for the sake of an improved appearance, don’t compromise (or even negate) your results for an addiction which has mostly likely already cost you plenty. Non-smokers enjoy better and longer lasting results from plastic surgery, a quicker recovery, and less risk of wound healing complications. | |  | |