When prospective patients come in for a consultation, it’s not uncommon for them to request a cosmetic procedure based on a particular consumer trend. Americans underwent 17.5 million cosmetic procedures last year, and many patients opted for minimally invasive procedures that focused on the face, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons’ (ASPS) annual plastic surgery statistics report. As new trends become more popular, and the interest in surgical and minimally invasive procedures continues to grow, plastic surgery will remain in high demand.

The ASPS recently surveyed its membership of board-certified plastic surgeons to gain perspective on the present and future state of plastic surgery in America. Here are some key takeaways.

**MOST ANTICIPATED REQUESTS**

Plastic surgeons anticipate that breast augmentation, tummy tucks, and liposuction will continue to be the three most-requested surgical procedures in the upcoming year; however, there will continue to be a rise in minimally invasive procedures that allow patients to improve other areas that may not require surgery. Procedures such as neurotoxins (i.e., Botox), soft-tissue fillers, and chemical peels still represent the majority of cosmetic procedures (15.7 million in 2017)—having increased nearly 200 percent since 2000.

Neurotoxins still lead the way as the most anticipated request, followed by fillers, chemical peels, laser hair removal, and dermabrasion. As patients opt for innovative ways to shape their bodies, non-invasive procedures, such as those to eliminate fat and tighten skin, are on the rise, with cellulite treatments representing the sharpest rise. They are up nearly 20 percent over last year.

**A NEW DAY**

It wasn’t so long ago that patients would shy away from discussing whether they had cosmetic work, but those days are gone. Two-thirds of the plastic surgeons surveyed say patients are owning their new looks, and openly discuss their procedures and experiences—positive and negative—with families and friends.

**SUBTLE IN. SCULPTED OUT**

Once upon a time, cosmetic patients sought after and preferred a “sculpted” facial look, but today’s patients want to look like a better version of themselves without dramatically altering their features. Patients are favoring subtle, incremental changes. More than three-quarters of surgeons surveyed agree that patients request a “more natural” look. Moreover, patients have shied away from trying to replicate specific celebrity features, with nearly half of surgeons saying they don’t receive these types of requests these days (e.g., Angelina Jolie lips, Kim Kardashian buttock), despite the influence of pop culture and social media on a patient’s decision to get plastic surgery.

**IT’S A FAMILY AFFAIR**

Patients are getting plastic surgery earlier in life, and it’s not uncommon for them to undergo...

(Continued on page 38)
plastic surgery procedures with a family member or a friend. More than a third of surgeons surveyed report seeing an increase in consultations among a parent and child (38 percent), couples (32 percent are married, living together, or are partners) and siblings (24 percent).

**NOT FOR EVERYONE**
Several factors can motivate people to seek plastic surgery, but more than 60 percent of plastic surgeons admit they've declined patients because they “clearly didn’t need it,” or they “didn’t think it would help them.” Surgeons also reported turning down prospective patients due to unrealistic expectations, psychiatric concerns, obesity, or health issues. Sometimes explaining to patients why a procedure is not in their best interest can avoid future dissatisfaction. Helping patients achieve their desired outcome and our ability to have a positive impact on their life is one of the most rewarding and exciting aspects of our profession.

**A CONSISTENT COMMITMENT**
Plastic surgery trends may come and go, but our consistent commitment to provide excellent patient care and maintain the highest ethical standards remain unwavering in the ever-changing face of plastic surgery.

**ALAN MATARASSO, MD**
- Alan Matarasso, MD is president of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, Clinical Professor of Surgery at Northwell Health System/Hofstra University, Zuckerman School of Medicine, and a private practice plastic surgeon based in New York City.

(Continued from page 30)