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COSMETIC SURGERY

COMPUTER IMAGING

“There are advantages to both patients and doctors to be able to visualize the outcome of a surgery before it actually occurs. This is a powerful educational tool” Dr. Romano

BACKGROUND

Photography has been an integral part of every plastic surgeons practice for many years. Photographs have been used by most doctors for documentation purposes only, but Dr. Romano uses them for teaching also. In the past he had to take Polaroid photographs and draw on the photos, or draw pictures to describe procedures, techniques, and results. The recent advances in the field of digital photography and image treatment software have revolutionized what can be done in the office in not only taking photographs but immediately viewing these photos and then refining them on the computer screen to show your result.

TECHNIQUE

A digital image is taken in the office by Dr. Romano using a state-of-the-art camera. This image is immediately loaded into the computer and the software then projects this on the computer screen. Through the use of a small pen on a pad, circles can be drawn and areas changed on your own actual image. For instance, the nasal profile can be changed to illustrate removal of a bump and raising the tip. Or the changes in the hips, inner thighs, outer thighs and knees can be demonstrated for liposuction of these areas. The images can then be seen in a side-by-side fashion to help visualize the before and after effect. Furthermore, Dr. Romano then draws on the screen to demonstrate incisions, underlying anatomy, or the detailed aspects of the technique to further educate you about the procedure.

ADVANTAGES

- Computer imaging is an educational and communication tool.
- It allows you more time with the doctor to talk, answer questions, and review your concerns.
- It allows patients to become actively involved in what they anticipate and desire in a result and the spectrum of potential results. Here it may help to emphasize the “not enough” or “too much” aspect of a particular demonstrated result.
- It provides both the patient and the surgeon a higher level of insight and understanding to better make predictions and plans for surgical procedures.
- It can help to present the degrees and range of options available.
- If you are considering multiple procedures, it helps you to determine if you like one or several or all.
- It helps patient and doctor to visualize not only what surgery to do and how much, but also very importantly, when not to do a certain procedure and technique.
- It allows both patient and doctor to each see, discuss, and relate to the procedure in more detail. This contributes to one of the most fundamental aspects of the aesthetic surgery relationship: that you and your doctor have the same artistic perspective and what you want is what he sees, and what he predicts is what you desire.

All of these factors contribute to a better understanding of the procedure and a better evaluation of your doctor’s artistic perspective. Both of these are important in building your trust and easing your apprehension.