

M.D. Update

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*Plastic surgeon
Dr. Martin Luftman
keeps ahead of changes
within his specialty while
fulfilling the needs of his
patients and community.*

Passion for
PERFECTION

Dr. Martin Luftman is a leading plastic surgeon in Central Kentucky but he has another gift, one that does not require a medical degree yet is earned through life experience. He is a great storyteller. While attending Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island he had a seemingly random encounter with a football teammate. As he recalls, it was his junior year and he was leaning toward a degree in dentistry. "One of my buddies on the football team saw me carving chalk, in preparation for the dental boards. The carving was required to show manual dexterity. He was pre-med and was fascinated, so he agreed to take the dental boards with me, if I would take the medical boards with him.

"Ironically, he's a dentist today and I'm a doctor."

It's a story he enjoys sharing and reflects his approachable nature. It also hits on a theme that has run throughout his career: Don't be afraid to change your mind. "I feel very lucky. I joke that I stumbled onto plastic surgery, and I am so glad that I did." I tell my children, "The smartest thing you can do is find something that you enjoy waking up and doing on a daily basis." It is no surprise, then, that the story of Dr. Luftman's journey is a work in progress, one he looks forward to telling.

Dr. Luftman was in medical school at the University of Cincinnati in the mid 1970s. At that time they did not have a Plastic Surgery Department, so he thought that he would pursue a residency in Ear, Nose and Throat. Dr. Luftman went to Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest University in North Carolina for his surgical residency. It was there that he was exposed to Plastic Surgery and the fascination began. "The surgical areas that attracted me were first solving the puzzles of repairing birth defects like cleft lip and palate. Secondly, I was captivated by the artistic elements of cosmetic surgery. Plastic Surgery is a great specialty because there are so many offshoots. The cosmetic components cover not only the head and neck but the whole body. It is all encompassing and diverse." He decided to change his career path and his next stop was the Medical College of Ohio at Toledo where he specialized in plastic and reconstructive surgery.

Dr. Luftman states that his passion for excellence in plastic surgery was inspired by



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Passion for PERFECTION

BY ROBYN LEACH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KIRK SCHLEA



his early mentors: Dr. John Kelleher and Dr. Jim Sullivan, at Toledo, and other leaders in the field including Dr. Tom Rees in New York, Dr. Fritz Barton in Dallas and Dr. Carl Hartrampf in Atlanta.

When Dr. Luftman describes the remarkable innovations in plastic surgery, it is evident that he made the right choice for himself. “During the first half of my career, I did a mix of reconstructive and cosmetic surgery. Breast reconstruction, in fact, always had a special place in my heart. Many times the reconstruction was done at the time of the mastectomy and the patients came into my practice during a very difficult period in their lives.” Dr. Luftman says it was gratifying to help his patients and to get to know their families.

Approximately ten years ago, Dr. Luftman saw his practice evolve more and more toward cosmetic surgery. “I strive to perform at the top level of my ability, so I decided to limit the types of surgeries that I do. It was a difficult decision, but a necessary one because of the time demands. I really enjoy the delicate detail oriented procedures such as, eyelids, rhinoplasties, brow and facelifts. While I keep up with reconstructive surgery, I focus on the developments in cosmetic facial and breast surgery.”

Some recent advances have centered on more minor surgical and non-surgical procedures that can delay the need for surgery or enhance someone further after surgery. He likes the results surgeons are getting with fat grafting. “It does work, and while it’s not predictable in every person, we can get fat to graft well. It can add to the quality of irradiated skin after a mastectomy. Plastic surgeons believe that fat grafting provides a stem cell enhancement to the irradiated tissue. It can also be used for filling lines and contouring.”

In addition, another advancement, according to Dr. Luftman, is the ability, with neurotoxins, to avoid or delay surgery. “Dysport and Botox are quite effective and can be done in the office. The fillers, Restylane, Juvederm and Radiesse are excellent for both our surgical patients and our younger patients who aren’t quite ready for surgery. The filler’s role in volume replacement helps make the face more youthful.”

To reduce his patient’s recovery time following aesthetic surgery, Dr. Luftman has developed a systematic approach

using long-lasting numbing agents and anti-inflammatory medicines during surgery so that patients wake up with little or no pain.” Most patients are truly surprised at how little pain they experience”.

Dr. Luftman is candid when addressing two subjects: the challenges and misconceptions about plastic surgery. “The primary challenge that we face is unrealistic expectation among patients. The reality is, nothing is perfect, but we strive for the most near-perfect result we can achieve.” The misconception is that plastic surgery is frivolous or at least minor in the medical spectrum.

“I would answer that our work is extremely important because if someone feels good about themselves, they’re going to feel better about what they’re doing

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Dr. Luftman with staff: Debbie Thompson, LPN, Vicky Taylor RN, and Joyce Blake, office manager.

COSMETIC PROCEDURES COMMONLY PERFORMED BY MARTIN LUFTMAN, MD

Facelift	Breast Lift	Botox & Dysport Injections
Eyelids	Breast Reconstruction	Laser Correction & Resurfacing
Brow Lift	Breast Reduction	Lip Fillers
Chin Implants	Tummy Tuck	Permanent Make-up
Lip Implants	Arm Lipectomy and Lifts	Skin Care
Otoplasty	Liposuction	Tattoo Removal
Rhinoplasty	Injectable Fillers	
Breast Augmentation		

every day. Outlook is so important in life. Appearance matters. We don't change people; our patients change themselves when they feel better about how they appear."

That philosophy extends beyond Dr. Luftman's practice in Lexington. "A few years ago, I was fortunate enough to accompany Henry Vasconez, MD, who runs a mission trip to his native Ecuador every year." Dr. Vasconez is a widely respected professor of surgery and chief of the division of plastic surgery at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Luftman says it was one of the most gratifying experiences of his life. "My wife, Ginny, and two of our children, Eric and Kevin, joined us. Surgery was performed on children born with cleft lips, abnormal ears and burn victims. We stayed for the post op clinic and were able to participate in the after care. It was a tremendous experience." Dr. Luftman and his wife hope to

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make another trip to Ecuador. Their two sons have already returned for an additional mission trip.

In the meantime, Dr. Luftman is thinking about another group of people who need his help. "I would love to participate in helping veterans. When you see the terrible injuries they've suffered, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, the VA system cannot possibly keep up." The IEDs, or improvised explosive devices, commonly used as weapons against American troops in the

Middle East inflict particularly disfiguring wounds. Dr. Luftman is impressed with a program called Operation Mend, begun by Dr. Timothy Miller, chief of UCLA's division of plastic and reconstructive surgery. It offers pro bono medical and surgical expertise to veterans injured while deployed in the War against Terrorism. "I'm looking into how we might get something like that started here in Lexington."

Dr. Luftman has practiced plastic surgery in Lexington for over 20 years and has one of the most experienced and exceptional plastic surgery teams in Kentucky: Vicky Taylor, RN, Joyce Blake, Office Manager, and Debbie Thompson, LPN. "Our practice philosophy, says Dr. Martin Luftman, "is to treat each patient with privacy and professionalism in a pampering environment. Our love for plastic surgery and attention to detail has generated countless satisfied patients whose happiness is our focus and biggest reward." ♦



Martin J. Luftman, MD

Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

EDUCATION

MD, Univ. of Cincinnati Medical School
 BA, Brown University, Providence, RI

INTERNSHIP

Wake Forest Univ. Baptist Medical Center
 Winston Salem, NC 1976-77

GENERAL SURGERY RESIDENCY

Wake Forest Univ. Baptist Medical Center
 Winston Salem, NC 1977-79

PLASTIC SURGERY RESIDENCY

Medical of Ohio at Toledo
 Toledo, 1979-81

CERTIFICATION

American Board of Plastic Surgery, 1982

AFFILIATION

American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery;
 American Society of Plastic Surgeons;
 Clinical Faculty Department of Plastic Surgery,
 University of Kentucky; Southeastern Society of
 Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery