



**State of the Art:
Dr. Thomas Jeneby Changes
the Face of San Antonio
Plastic Surgery**

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[PHOTOGRAPHY: JACOB RODRIGUEZ]*



Two years ago, Shirley Birnbaum suffered from asthma and chronic bronchitis, which were exacerbated by the 170 pounds she carried on her 5-foot-1 frame.

"I couldn't breathe," the 73-year-old retired school bus driver said. "I couldn't even walk across a room without wheezing. When I spoke to people, they thought I had just finished running."

After learning about Dr. Thomas Jeneby, a board-certified plastic surgeon, on the Internet, Birnbaum verified his credentials. After a consultation, she eventually had liposuction and a tummy tuck.

"It saved my life," Birnbaum said. "Since then, I haven't had bronchitis. Anyone else would have turned me away because of my age, but Dr. Jeneby said, 'As long as you're healthy.' That's his main concern."

Encouraged by the results and having gone from a size 18 to a size 8, Birnbaum recently returned to the surgeon's office for a lower face-lift, and said she is pleased with her improved appearance and with Jeneby's expertise.

Jeneby is founder of The Plastic and Cosmetic Center of South Texas, which he opened four years ago in the Medical Center. The 37-year-old Washington, D.C., native specializes in cosmetic surgery and reconstructive breast surgery.

"I enjoy doing breast reconstruction on patients who have had mastectomies because of cancer," he said. "I like doing the cosmetic side, as well. I'm about 90 percent cosmetic and 10 percent reconstructive."

He also is an expert in SmartLipo, abdominoplasty, adjustable breast implants, breast augmentation, breast reduction, brow lifts, facelifts, rhinoplasty (nose surgery), liposuction, lip augmentation and otoplasty (ear surgery).

SmartLipo is one of today's popular cosmetic surgical procedures, Jeneby said, adding that he was the first to offer it in San Antonio.

"It's a laser-assisted body lipo sculpture technique where you place the laser under the skin, melt the fat, shrink the skin, and then you absorb the fat," he said. "I've noticed in the last nine months it's better used in combination with regular liposuction to remove bulky fat."

Women often come to Jeneby for adjustable breast implants, which, he explained, is the post-operative adjustment of the breast implant through the skin. Jeneby inserts a needle through a port and add saline while the patient is awake. She can then tell him whether or not she likes the size of the implant.

"Thirty-seven percent of women go back to the operating room to change the size of an implant," he said. "(Through adjustable breast implants) they don't have to go back. When they're done, I make them wait two weeks to go try on summer clothes or bathing suits, and then

they come back, and I remove the port under local anesthesia."

The Plastic and Cosmetic Center of South Texas also offers Fractional CO2 Laser Resurfacing, a state-of-the-art procedure for removing acne scars and wrinkles.

"You dial in how much you want to laser off," Jeneby explained. "If you want to laser off 60 percent, leave 40 percent healed so the healing zones will populate the unhealed zones."

While women account for a majority of his patients, about 15 percent of the surgeon's clients are men. Many receive liposuction, brow lifts and mini face lifts. According to national statistics, Jeneby can expect that figure to steadily increase because more men of all ages and walks of life are getting nips and tucks, according to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) website.

The top five male cosmetic surgeries in 2004 were nose reshaping, hair transplantation, eyelid surgery, liposuction and breast reduction, the ASPS stated.

"I have a lot of guys come in here for SmartLipo for their pecs and buttocks," he said. "I get rid of the fat, and I can do abdominal sculpting where I etch little lines to make them look like they have a six-pack."

There are times, Jeneby said, when he will not perform cosmetic surgery on a patient, and that usually involves people undergoing a dramatic life change or those suffering from depression.

"They tend to need a little more guidance before undergoing a surgical procedure because they may be depressed about something else, and they may put that under your surgical care," he said.

And in those instances when people will come to him to change their appearance to look like a celebrity, Jeneby said he guides them away from that decision.

"Plastic surgery is only as good as the canvas," he said. "If it's sparkling white, and there are no blemishes, it's going to be a better-looking painting."

One of Jeneby's concerns is that people seeking plastic surgeons who are certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. For more information, visit www.abplsurg.org and click on FAQ.

"Ask the doctor to show you his degree and his board certification," Jeneby advises.

For those who come to him for plastic surgery, Jeneby prefers to give them a natural post-surgical look.

"The key to any good plastic surgery is almost like you weren't there," he said. "It's like the Navy SEALs. You go in, do your job and get out without leaving any tracks." **N**

For more information, visit www.drjenebyplasticsurgery.com or call 210-270-8595.