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IN DEPTH

**HOW TO
SURVIVE
ALMOST
ANYTHING**



1 FOREHEAD

"A little Botox with a brow lift – just 2mm – would be enough to open up the eye area. It's about ageing gracefully, not a wind-tunnel effect"

3 TEMPLES AND CHEEKS

"I can see evidence of volume loss by the sunken effect around the temples and cheek area, for which I'd use Sculptra"

2 EYES

"I'd use a procedure called fat transportation to get rid of bags, and perhaps a little Botox to address crow's feet"

4 LAUGHTER LINES

"I wouldn't recommend a full face lift right now, but a mid face lift would help greatly with laughter lines"

Does this woman need plastic surgery?

Have you ever wondered what a top cosmetic surgeon would make of your face? When A-list surgeon Dr Leslie Howard Stevens visited the UK, *Easy Living's* beauty and health director, Catherine Turner, couldn't resist asking him what he would recommend for her 45-year-old face

1 FOREHEAD

"The skin is dropping here, and this is causing a noticeable fold over your eyelids," Dr Stevens tells me, as he gently uses a cotton bud to prop up my poor sagging eyes. "I would maybe combine a little Botox with a brow lift. Just 2mm would be enough to open up your eye area, while maintaining a natural look. It's about ageing gracefully, not a wind-tunnel effect. I would do this with an endoscopic technique, held in place with Endotine forehead devices." Dr Stevens shows me some clear plastic triangular shapes with small hooks, which are secured into the skull under the skin and hairline. These act rather like picture hooks to hang the flesh, so it heals in its new lifted place. In time, the plastic dissolves. An endoscopic brow lift, of the kind Dr Stevens mentions, is where a pencil-slim camera (endoscope) is inserted into several small incisions in the hairline so the surgeon has a clear view of the muscle and skin while performing the lift.

COST: £7,500
SURGERY TIME: 2 hours

2 EYES

"The forehead lift will 'open up' your eyes, but I would also recommend some additional

eyelid surgery [known in surgical terms as blepharoplasty] to remove the 'bulge' at the inner corner and on upper lids. I'd also use a procedure called 'fat transportation' to get rid of the bags. Many surgeons completely remove the fat pockets which form eye bags, but I find this technique can leave eyes looking sunken, with an unnatural cat-like appearance. Instead of taking out the fat, I move it down to just below the eye socket, so it is still attached. This has the effect of leaving a youthful plumpness. Finally, perhaps a little Botox to address the crow's feet around the eyes."

COST: £3,900
SURGERY TIME: 1 hour

3 TEMPLES AND CHEEKS

"One effect of ageing is that skin gets thinner, and, as gravity sets in, sagging occurs. I can see evidence of this sort of volume loss in you by the sunken effect around your temples and cheek area, for which I'd use Sculptra." Dr Stevens explains that Sculptra is an injectable solution which stimulates skin to produce collagen to bring back plumpness and, therefore, a little lift.

COST: £540 per injection
SURGERY TIME: About 30 minutes

4 LAUGHTER LINES

"I wouldn't recommend a full face lift for you right now, but a mid face lift would help greatly with naso-labial folds [laughter lines to you and me]," explains Dr Stevens. He then shows me another plastic device he uses to do what's called an Endotine cheek lift. A tiny, flexible spatula-like device with five 'hooks' or 'tines' at one end is inserted along the cheek bone once minute incisions are made in the hairline, and the soft tissue of the cheek is moved back and up. The 'tines' then hold the flesh in its new, lifted position at the cheek end, which is secured into the skull underneath the hairline.

COST: £4,800
SURGERY TIME: 2 hours

The recovery time for these procedures is about two weeks. Bruising varies from patient to patient so this is a general estimate. Sculptra and Botox can be injected during or after a surgical procedure, depending on the individual. The fees here do not include costs of operating room and anaesthesia. The fees are determined by the time in surgery, with an hourly rate of about £580 for the first hour and about £300 for each additional hour. Anaesthesia is about £220 per hour.

LESSONS LEARNED

This is very much an overview of a first meeting with Dr Stevens, and he pointed out that it's not the way he'd usually work, as he'd usually listen to a patient's concerns before offering recommendations. Interestingly, he would also want to see photographs of myself when I was younger to see how I have aged. For example, he commented on how straight my brows were, suggesting an arch could be youth-enhancing if that was how they were before. I'm glad I got the lowdown from a surgeon whose work is evidently so good. However, it still doesn't feel quite right for me, and hearing about what the procedures actually involve has made me even more reluctant. Maybe I'll feel differently in a few years...

Dr Leslie Howard Stevens is an aesthetic plastic surgeon certified by the American Board Of Plastic Surgery, and practices at the Lasky Clinic in Beverly Hills, California. For more information, visit laskyclinic.com and drlesliehstevens.com.

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