

ask the expert

DR. SREEKANT CHERUKURI Facial plastic surgery specialist

Dr. Cherukuri, a leader in Northwest Indiana for minimally-invasive cosmetic procedures for the face and neck, has helped thousands of patients since 2003. Dr. Cherukuri, a member of Carepointe Ear Nose and Throat Sinus Center, has offices in Munster, Merrillville and St. John.



TONY V. MARTIN, THE TIMES

Q: How are you different from other plastic surgeons? Facial plastic surgery is a sub-specialty of plastic surgery and ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgery. If you go to the Yellow Pages to find a plastic surgeon, most of the plastic surgeons in Chicago and the Midwest spend three-quarters of their time doing breast augmentations and tummy tucks and other non-facial procedures. We spend 100 percent of our time on the face and neck. We have the most experience in reconstructive and aesthetic procedures, including face lifts, eyelid lifts, nose jobs, Botox and other facial fillers.

Q: Why is it important to go to a plastic surgeon who specializes in the face? When you have the most experience, you have the most natural-appearing results. What's unique about the face is you can't really hide it under clothing. Everything is out there for everyone to see, so it's important to do it right.

Q: What are some trends in facial plastic surgery? What's the difference between visiting you versus a medical spa? The trend over the last 10 years has moved from extreme makeovers to minimally-invasive "no down time" procedures. People are becoming more accepting of improving body image. We perform eyelid lifts, which

helps your eyes look less puffy and tired-looking. We also do Botox and facial fillers. It's very important that the person doing your procedure be a surgeon. When it comes to these procedures, cheaper is not better. You want someone who has done this for 15 years, not learned how to do it during a weekend-long course. We offer free consultations so people can learn what will and won't work for them, and so they know what to expect. We want well-educated, happy patients.

Q: What is "The Weekend Lift?" In 2003 we pioneered a minimal-incision procedure called "The Weekend Lift." A normal facelift takes four to six hours, requires general anesthesia, has extensive recuperation time and can cost up to \$20,000. The Weekend Lift is designed for active people who don't want much down-time. The Weekend Lift can get similar results, but relies on local anesthesia. It takes about an hour; recovery is many times the length of a weekend, and gets excellent results. It generally costs under \$5,000. We aim for natural-looking results, making people look like they did five to 10 years ago. We have done more than 600 of these, and have more than 99 percent patient satisfaction.

Q: What kinds of skin cancer treatments do you do? We also work with dermatologists to treat

facial lesions and skin cancer. Many dermatologists don't want to cut on the face and neck because they want their patients to have the least visible scar. We have extensive training in skin cancers and other lesions, and most patients have almost scar-free healing. If they have a suspicious lesion or mark on their face or neck, they can come see us directly. When it comes to lesions that are itching, bleeding or not healing right, we urge them to come see us immediately. Depending on the type of lesion, patients here are treated with local anesthesia in the office and in most cases can drive themselves home afterward. This saves time and money compared with going to a hospital setting.

Q: What are the things we can do to help prevent signs of aging and skin cancers? Avoid tanning beds, don't smoke and stay out of the sun whenever possible. Always use sun block, even if it's cloudy or if there's snow on the ground. We recommend using SPF 30 or higher, but any SPF is better than none. It helps prevent aging from UV rays and it helps prevent skin cancer.
— Carrie Rodovich

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Visit his website at theweekendlift.com or call 219.836.2201.