

Did she or didn't she? Expert tips for facelifts

By Lois Joy Johnson, USA TODAY

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Recently British actresses Kate Winslet, 35; Rachel Weisz, 41; and Emma Thompson, 52, caused a stir by saying they are against all cosmetic surgery. That doesn't stop us from pulling back our faces and wondering what could be. Suddenly -- and suspiciously -- we're seeing women in politics, music, films and TV all looking like they're 30-something. They can't all be blessed with great genes, can they?



▶ CAPTION

By Chris Pizzello, AP

Dr. Alan Matarasso, a board-certified plastic surgeon and spokesperson for the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, says the combination of job crises, economic stress and a population of women working longer and dating later, has caused a recent uptick in facial rejuvenation procedures. Considering a little work yourself? Here are his five things to consider before a private consultation.

1. **Take the facelift bed test.** There's a simple trick that shows how you'll look before and after. Sit on the edge of your bed, lean forward and look down into a mirror held below your face. See all the loose skin and saggy bits? Now lie back on the bed with the mirror raised over your face and parallel to it. Like what you see? That's the after.

2. **Torn between fillers and surgery? It's the difference between ironing a pair of pants or tailoring them.** Ironing your pants (fillers, Botox and laser) temporarily smooths out wrinkles but you'll need frequent redos for maintenance. Hemming and tailoring your pants (a facelift) gives you a crisp, trim line that lasts for 10 to 15 years or more.

3. **PRP and Ultrasound are the hot in-office procedures.** PRP or Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy (also called Vampire therapy!) uses your own blood with its growth factors and stem cells, drawn and re-injected, to stimulate collagen production for younger-looking skin. Ultrasound therapy tightens skin around the eyes and jaw -- but don't expect the taut look of surgery. It's more subtle and requires repeat visits. It's also being used to speed healing if you do have a lift.

4. **Your neck ages faster and far worse than your face.** Facelifts and necklifts used to be one process. Now you can get what's called an Isolated Necklift without doing your face. Stitches are hidden behind the ears so you can still wear a ponytail. Good news for women who hate their necks but are fine with their faces -- especially those who have been diligent about sunscreen and skin care from the chin up, but forgot to continue the routine to the collarbones.

5. **Tired saggy eyes are not necessarily an age-related phenomenon.** Women in their 20s and 30s can have deeply recessed lids or genetic under-eye bags that can be easily resolved in a once-in-a-lifetime surgical procedure.