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nip and talk: doctors dish

WHAT ARE BRIDES REALLY HAVING DONE BEHIND OFFICE DOORS? THE PROFESSIONALS PEEL BACK THE LAYERS.

Get the ring, set a date, schedule an injection. It sounds extreme, but in a survey of dermatologists and plastic surgeons nationwide, we discovered that for many brides-to-be, laser treatments, Botox, and fillers are popular (see "Survey Says," below)—and as much a part of the engagement as trying out updos. What's driving them? For starters, there's the celebrity factor. "Stars' talking about the work they've had done has made these options seem as commonplace as a trip to your colorist," says New York dermatologist Lisa Airan. "Then there's the fact that women are marrying at an older age, when lines and sagging can be an issue."

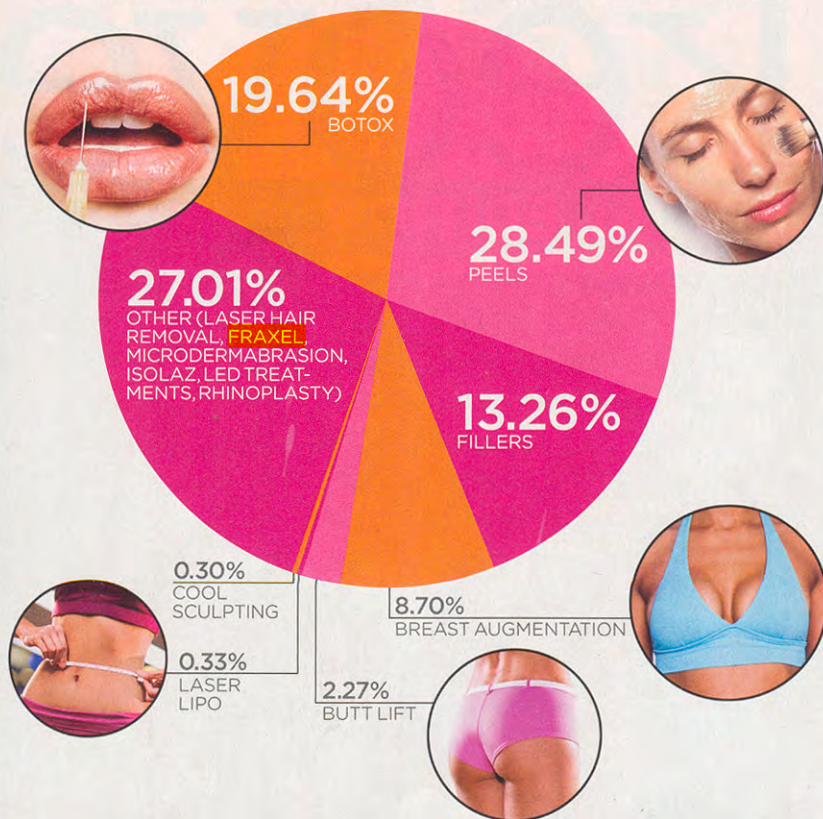
No surprise: The most popular treatments combat aging. Plumpers like Restylane are in demand because they target hollows under the eyes and around the mouth, eliminating shadows that even the best makeup job may not hide in pictures. Light-source procedures like Fraxel brighten the complexion, while San Francisco dermatologist Seth Matarasso says he routinely zaps brides with Titan, an infrared device that heats, remodels, and firms collagen. Of course, even beauty miracles have a downside,

Matarasso explains: "Doing bridal Botox requires a light hand. I tell my patients that this will be the happiest day of their life—they want to be able to emote."

For some, rejuvenated skin isn't enough; they opt for the knife. Nose jobs and breast augmentations are the most common prewed surgical procedures—so much so that some dress salons make brides sign a "no boob job" clause, lest the ordered gown not fit the new body. Brides who are feeling too fleshy sign up for a new kind of lipo that uses a fat-melting laser and local anesthesia. Too scary? New York plastic surgeon Trevor Born says his engaged patients ask for cool sculpting, which freezes fat cells that then dissolve within weeks.

All of which comes at a price. Yet at a time when most couples are saving every cent for the wedding, some women are willing to pay serious bucks for these procedures. "Look, all brides are beautiful, but there's nothing wrong with a little extra help," says Andrew Jacono, a Long Island, New York, plastic and reconstructive surgeon. "If something really bothers you—a feature you've always wanted to change—find the right doctor and go for it."

SURVEY SAYS... THE MOST POPULAR PRE-WEDDING PROCEDURES



the big reveal

True tales from brides who went under the knife



▲ **STEPHANIE RION, 27** "I had always been self-conscious about my small chest and had considered breast augmentation for years. After I got engaged, my fiancé and I decided that this was a good time to do it. He wanted me to be happy with my body on my wedding day—and I really was. It was great not to feel self-conscious in my gown, or in the bathing suit I wore during my honeymoon."



▲ **LORI REED, 51** "I had liposuction on my hips, back, and abdomen, and a butt fat transfer. I also had surgery on my lower eyelids to get rid of my fat bulges, along with a little Juvederm injected to smooth facial wrinkles. Would I do it again? Definitely! I have no regrets. This is my second marriage, and being an older bride, I really wanted to make sure I looked fabulous at my wedding."



▲ **LAUREY RUSSO*** "I was unhappy with the results from the rhinoplasty I had done about 10 years ago, and dreaded having my photo taken. So I had my second one two months before my wedding. I also had Botox and Juvederm injections in my face, because I felt I looked tired and was showing signs of tanning I'd done in my teenage days. Everything I had done helped me enjoy my day—no insecurities!"

*Declined to reveal her age