

Practical information for patients and doctors

Looking good. The Australian guide to skin care, cosmetic medicine and cosmetic surgery. Laurence Anderson. Sydney: MJA Books, 2006 (170pp, \$29.95). ISBN 0-85557-044-X.

THIS BOOK IS WELL NAMED. It was written by a cosmetic physician who needed an accessible, comprehensive book for patient education. It describes normal ageing and sun damage and outlines means to slow their effects, including lifestyle modifications and the full range of treatments. These range from medically-active creams (“cosmeceuticals”), injectables, peels and laser treatments through to plastic surgery of many different kinds.

The book will be useful for consumers, who can read the magazine-length chapters on areas of interest, and family physicians, who often cannot answer their patients’ questions about new cosmetic procedures. It will be a very useful source of information for the clients of plastic surgeons, cosmetic physicians and dermatologists, particularly if they read it before sitting down with their doctor for a consultation.

There is a very practical but dry chapter on exactly what is involved in undergoing a major surgical procedure, which includes easily-forgotten details such as incidental costs, down-time, and

the cost of support-people taking time off work.

I especially liked the section on sun damage and ageing, and would love to see a simplified version published in the teen magazines.

There are plenty of good photographs illustrating the text, but I have one reservation. The potential complications of each cosmetic procedure are discussed briefly, but no pictures of problems are included. The descriptions made little impact.

The advance copies of the book have been popular with my clients at the clinic, and with visitors at home who have never had any cosmetic procedures.



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