

Dr. Jeffrey Yager

Beautifying New York Moms And More

by Jessica Garthwaite and Melissa Kell

Dr. Yager says he's been interested in medicine since nursery school, a desire that never waned. He chose The Johns Hopkins University for its reputation as one of the best places to study premed. After graduation, Dr. Yager went to Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons for medicine. "It was there I discovered my passion for plastic surgery," he says. "In anatomy class one year, the Chairman of Plastic Surgery, Dr. Norman Hugo, gave a talk that sparked my interest in the field. I felt that plastic surgery was as much art and creativity as it was science, and since every patient has different needs and desires, every surgery would be different. How could it ever be boring?" He also completed his General and Plastic Surgery training at Columbia and finished his residency as Chief Resident in Plastic Surgery.

He opened his private practice, Yager Plastic Surgery in 1997 on the Columbia Presbyterian campus, located in the Upper West Side/Washington Heights area of Manhattan. Success has come quickly: Dr. Yager has expanded twice and has built a state-of-the-art ambulatory surgical center accredited by the American Association of Accredited Ambulatory Surgical Facility (AAAASF) as well as a cutting-edge Y Spa.

Dr. Yager was seeking to open a plastic surgery facility in an area that didn't have many places offering such services. "As a medical student and resident, it became clear the area (Washington Heights) needed a private practice cosmetic plastic surgeon. The old hospital was not geared for an esthetic practice in the community, and my patients convinced me to fill that need," he says.

Two procedures are the most popular in Dr. Yager's practice and comprise about 75 percent of the treatments he does: body contouring (like liposculpture and tummy tuck) and breast augmentation. He prides himself on creating a natural look with both procedures: "Thanks to the advances in implant and body contouring technology, I'm able to create new body shapes that look natural—never false."

Known for helping women achieve their best bodies after childbirth, that's what Dr. Yager calls "one of the most rewarding parts of what I do." He says, "After pregnancy, the body is often changed regardless of how fit you are, or how healthfully you eat or how much you exercise. It's important to let women know that this is not their fault, and that there are procedures to restore your figure to even better than pre-pregnancy shape."

"There are several changes that happen to a woman's body during pregnancy. For example, the growth of the baby can stretch the abdominal muscles beyond what exercise can fix, breasts change in shape and size, and stretch marks and new fat deposits form around the stomach," he says, noting that his personal approach is to consider the whole body when determining a post-partum plan.

"My own wife underwent the procedure,"

he says, citing it's safe and beneficial for patients. But since women's bodies all change differently during pregnancy, treatment is all based on an intensely specific and individual evaluation and can include liposculpture of the abdomen or back, buttocks reshaping, tummy tuck and breast lift, reduction or augmentation. "The common number of procedures done during a mom make-over is three," notes Dr. Yager. "Every woman is different, so there are infinite combinations of treatments we can perform. We also ensure that a patient is in good overall health before considering any elective procedure." The best candidate, says Dr. Yager, is a woman who is done having children and maintains a stable weight.

Also, he doesn't cap his treatments to invasive procedures, Dr. Yager treats skin, too. If a woman's complexion is also suffering from hormonal discoloration conditions like melasma, Dr. Yager will also work with patients to administer treatments to even out the tone.

Recovery time depends on the procedures and the individual patient. "If, say, a patient comes in for liposuction on a Friday," says Dr. Yager, "she can expect to be working by Monday. However, the more invasive surgeries, like a tummy tuck, require a minimum of two weeks off, up to six to eight weeks—although discomfort typically only lasts a week."

"I believe patients who meet me tend to immediately trust me and feel confident in my ability to help them"

Dr. Yager is opening Yager Esthetics and the Y Spa this spring, a 6,000 sq. ft. facility that's used for cosmetic plastic surgery, advanced beauty treatments, lasers and all of the latest technologies.

The upside of having an on site AAAASF facility, and why he built one, is that Dr. Yager can now control and supervise every piece of equipment, and every touch point including the anesthesiologist, nurse and recovery room experience. "I can provide the best of the best to my patients," he says.

The Y Spa is an extension of the services Dr. Yager offers, allowing him to provide non-invasive treatments for his patients who are not ready or willing to have surgery. "The expanded Y Spa lets me offer a full array of skin and body treatments that we did not have room for," he says. The Y Spa will also offer the newest technologies, but not before ensuring their efficacy and safety. "We do not offer something just because it's new or popular. We test and insure the technology is effective, safe and better than the established methods before endorsing it," Dr. Yager says.

"I believe patients who meet me tend to immediately trust me and feel confident in my ability to help them," Dr. Yager says when talking about how he's amassed such a large clientele over the years. "It's also my belief that a plastic surgeon should be with his client for the entire process, meaning I personally evaluate each patient from start to finish, not a nurse or assistant. This helps us get to know each other and both decide if we are a good match for the surgeon-patient relationship," he continues.



Dr. Yager often gets asked about how he decides to take on another patient, and before doing so, he always evaluates their motivation for the surgery. "The only reason to consider cosmetic plastic surgery is if an area of your body bothers you to the point that it affects your daily life or self esteem. Looking better will not fix a bad relationship or get you a better job." So what happens when a

patient wants cosmetic surgery for all the wrong reasons? "I've learned that if you operate on an unhappy person, all you get is a better looking unhappy person," he says. **M**

Yager Plastic Surgery is located at 130 Fort Washington Ave., New York, NY. Call (212) 543-1700 or visit yagerplastic-surgery.com for more information.