



Beauty Personified

An interview with, **Haideh Hirmand, M.D., F.A.C.S.**
on Ageless Elegance

by Isabel Bolt

To describe Haideh Hirmand, M.D. as an accomplished, highly respected, Ivy League trained plastic surgeon would be accurate. But it wouldn't come close to the real story about a woman using her intelligence, influence, gifts and vision to advance her specialty in meaningful ways for others.

The story begins with her love of immunology, molecular biology and clinical work which eventually translated into the study of medicine. In plastic surgery Haideh discovered the perfect combination of scientific research, clinical diversity, and rapidly evolving technologies that fed her desire to reconcile diverse interests into a single career. It also appealed to her renaissance personality and passion for international health policy and volunteerism.

Women and leadership, is a topic close to Dr. Hirmand's heart, one which she has channeled into key roles in two of the most highly regarded societies within the male dominated specialty – American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) and The American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ASAPS). As the present chairman of the “Leadership Development Committee” of ASAPS and the immediate past chairman of the society's “Women Aesthetic Surgeon's Committee”, Dr. Hirmand directly impacts the specialty. Education and new technologies are the other two areas of deep interest. As a longstanding member of the Teaching Courses Committee of ASAPS, and a current member of “New Technology and Emerging Trends Committee” of ASPS/ASAPS, Dr. Hirmand contributes both to education within the aesthetic surgery community and to evaluation and enhancement of cutting edge technologies. Her commitment to education is also conveyed through her academic, research, and teaching activities and as a frequently invited speaker to national and international meetings.

“Rethinking beauty intelligently means recognizing the link between power, intelligence and beauty.”

Dr. Hirmand defines beauty through a unique lens, which reflects her philosophies and how she treats patients. How

does that relate to the subject of cosmetic enhancement? In terms of philosophy and approach, it is a key differentiator. “I practice a deeper level of thinking about beauty and how it is individually expressed. I believe in empowering one person at a time, not by changing how they look, but by highlighting their *best self* at any age, which creates *ageless elegance*.” That is the brand of her practice and it is a distinct message that is both fresh and relevant.

The subject of ageless elegance implies both “age appropriate” and “person appropriate” rejuvenation. Dr. Hirmand was speaking about age appropriateness 15 years ago when others were routinely performing the



Dr. Haideh Hirmand

pulled, altered, obvious “enhancements.” “The best results are achieved when they are age appropriate to the stage of life you are in, and furthermore appropriate to *who* you are and what your motivations are. My core belief is that ageless elegance is really about being your best self in every stage of life in a way that suits the unique person you are. It's not exclusive to beauty and appearance but they play a big part. It is an intrinsic human trait to want to look good.” Dr. Hirmand emphasizes that ageless elegance is only possible if you keep

looking like yourself, expressing your brand of uniqueness, in the context of who you are. It is about rejuvenating features and not altering them. “It's preserving that X factor. Who you are and how you look should correlate. And therein lies the key to feeling empowered through beauty.”

It is precisely this thoughtful vision and unique philosophy that compelled Vogue to feature Dr. Hirmand in their Women's Power issue acknowledging her accomplishments and her impact on the field.

“Woman's dialogue about their appearance has changed – for the better.”

Dr. Hirmand believes strongly that the role appearance plays in a woman's life is different today than in former generations. There was a time when a woman's only power was in her beauty. In the 1950s and 60s being too smart, athletic or

Shape Preserving Eyelift

More than Meets the Eye

When seeking aesthetic procedures the buzzword used almost unanimously by patients and cosmetic surgeons alike is natural. In fact it is used so often as to be practically meaningless. What is at the core of looking “natural?” Dr. Hirmand has the answer. “Everyone wants it, but no one can define it. Its essence basically is a function of preserving someone’s uniqueness and their special look.”

A good example of this concept is demonstrated in Dr. Hirmand’s approach to blepharoplasty, also known as an “eye lift.” Both upper and lower eyelid lifts are very popular procedures but that does not imply they are universally done well. “The eyes are the focal point of the face. If you change the eyes you will change a person’s overall look. I describe my approach as *The Shape Preserving Eyelift*.” This is a new concept because shape has never been the focus of an eyelift, yet it is the secret to a natural invisible result. Traditionally excess skin is excised, fat removed and wrinkles are pulled tighter. This can unnecessarily and inadvertently change the form and character of the eye. It will look different and “done.” The Shape Preserving Blepharoplasty is a set of four components that when taken into account and utilized, will ensure preserving the shape of the eyes while rejuvenating.



Different Eyelid Shapes
Prominent, Average, Deep-Set

A significant part of this approach has to do with understanding how different eye shapes as well as different *eyelid shapes* age, and how to treat them differentially in order to maintain the shape of the upper and lower lids. “State of the art rejuvenation for around the eyes, is *combining* surgical and non-surgical correction without influencing the basic shape of the eye itself whether addressing the upper lid or the lower lid, performing the tear trough correction procedure, or repleting volume of the eyelids with the Microbeading technique”. The latter two techniques are signature non-surgical procedures Dr. Hirmand has pioneered and can be combined with surgical techniques. Preservation of shape alongside rejuvenation is the hallmark of all the procedures offered at Dr. Hirmand’s practice.



Different Eyelid Shapes (Shadow Space)
Deep shadow space
to Non-visible shadow space

“bossy” was not considered “ladylike.” Conversely, by the 1980s, if a professional woman was to be taken seriously in a man’s world, she would downplay her femininity and appearance in favor of pursuing the next level of achievement in her field. Beauty and power seldom coexisted. “Today the role appearance plays in a woman’s life is so different than decades ago. Beauty has taken its rightful place alongside intelligence and power.” Captains of

science, industry, art and financial markets no longer feel they have to sacrifice how they look in order to emphasize who they are. “Beauty IS empowering,” notes Dr. Hirmand, as she points to a study done on effective leadership where appearance is indeed a pivotal part of one’s overall image and effectiveness. “Looking good inspires others to listen, hear and follow you. Women in powerful positions now view appearance as part of their

leadership style. Today women's dialogue with beauty has evolved into a sense of vitality and inspired presence."

"Elegance, by definition, is natural. It's an undeniable harmony, grace and it's about not trying too hard. It's more than a physical attribute – it is an attitude."

When Dr. Hirmand first began practicing aesthetic surgery, the predominant character of the specialty was about making physical parts of the body look younger: treating lines, getting rid of jowls, lifting and augmenting. All focus was upon isolated goals. There was no real concept in existence that put it all together philosophically, with practical application to real people and new generations in a way that made sense.

"Women have always been the primary consumer of medical aesthetics. The powerful women of today understand and relate to my philosophy about elegance regardless of age and the concept of *rethinking beauty intelligently*, which

has become the tag-line of my practice. Putting my aesthetic techniques in the context of the bigger picture of who they are and what they are striving towards has truly resonated. It's very satisfying."

How does Dr. Hirmand want to age? Elegantly. Glamorously. Vibrantly. "I want to be the person who is 65 and climbing

up mountains and skiing down. Someone who never stops appreciating art, engaging in intelligent debate, who travels the world exploring and seeking the next adventure. In essence, a woman who keeps growing, helping others do the same — while looking and feeling my best." ❖



For more information contact,

Haideh Hirmand, MD, 1040 Park Avenue,
New York, NY 10028. Phone: (212) 744-4400

Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery
Cornell-Weill Medical Center/NY Presbyterian Hospital

"Fighting violence against women in the broadest sense. This will be my cause in life."

Philanthropy has been an integral part of Dr. Hirmand's practice and she continues to work closely with a number of philanthropic programs.

"My big dream, and something I have been focusing on in recent time, is to finish developing a non-profit platform, active on the education and policy front, connecting women surgeons of all surgical specialties to global volunteer opportunities treating women and girls subject to violence".

As previous Vice President of the Executive Committee of Women for Women Plastic Surgery Aid program of the International Confederation for Plastic, Reconstructive, and Aesthetic Surgery (IPRAS), Dr. Hirmand's philanthropy has allowed her to bring awareness to issues impacting women's health. "I would like to dedicate as much time as possible to these causes in the future".

In addition to IPRAS, Dr. Hirmand donates a significant amount of time to volunteer work in both her community and abroad. For three years, Dr. Hirmand worked with the NYU-Downtown plastic surgery clinic donating treatments focused on reconstructive surgery. She has been invited to Mexico several times on reconstructive missions as part of the National Health Development Project of the Government of Mexico. She served as a Chairperson of the Health Committee of the National Council of Women and is a board member of the Women's Medical Association of New York City.



Dr. Haideh Hirmand