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Growing Numbers of Older Adults Opting for Jaw Surgery to Improve Appearance and Function

[Rosemont, IL, October 1, 2014] Corrective jaw surgery is the treatment of choice for improving facial appearance by correcting a protruding or underdeveloped jaw and other abnormalities of the facial skeleton. Such surgery also helps fix improperly aligned upper and lower teeth. While most patients who opted for this surgery in the past were in their 20s or 30s, more recently patients over 40 have become aware of improvements in these jaw surgical techniques and the resulting improved facial appearance and jaw function.

An article featured in the October issue of the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery* describes a recent study conducted to assess the frequency, patient experience, and outcomes of this surgery in older men and women.

Because outcome studies documenting recovery, complications and anatomic stability in patients under 25 might not apply to those over 40, the authors concluded, a study of older patients would yield information that could be used to educate those patients about expectations for recovery and outcomes and, in turn, lead to their improved satisfaction.

Entitled “Orthognathic Surgery in Patients Over 40 Years of Age: Indications and Special Considerations,” the article focuses on individuals under age 40 vs. those over age 40 who underwent orthognathic surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital from 1995 to 2012. Outcome measures included treatment indications, length of hospital stay, and complications.

The study, conducted at the Massachusetts General Hospital, revealed that older patients in general, and older men in particular, underwent the surgery more for functional reasons, whereas women more often chose it for improvement in appearance. It was not surprising that patients over 40 had longer hospital stays than those under 40, and more post-surgery problems.

Read the complete study findings at 56267: J Oral Maxillofac Surg 72:1995-2004, 2014.

The Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is published monthly by the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons to present to the dental and medical communities comprehensive coverage of new techniques, important developments and innovative ideas in oral and maxillofacial surgery. Practice-applicable articles help develop the methods used to handle dentoalveolar surgery, facial injuries and deformities, TMJ disorders, oral cancer, jaw reconstruction, anesthesia and analgesia. The journal also includes specifics on new instruments and diagnostic equipment and modern therapeutic drugs and devices.

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