

DUDE LOOKS LIKE A LADY

What gives the hard-working male executive the edge in these tough times? Plastic surgery, a makeover and a touch of Botox, of course, says **Caroline Phillips**

It used to be a man's world. But since the credit crunch men have increasingly been turning to everything from make-up and cosmetic surgery to hormone replacement therapy. Now chaps are having to play a woman's game. Men in high-powered jobs are expected to be eternally youthful, to display endless stamina and vigour. And, on top of this, increasingly they're judged on their looks.

Feeling this pressure, men have started taking action.

In the past two years, Dr Daniel Sister of Beauty Works West, one of the country's top specialists in aesthetic medicine and non-surgical procedures, has seen a huge rise in male patients. 'Men now account for 30 per cent of my work. Because of the economic crisis, men are looking for jobs or trying to keep them, so they want to look good, dynamic and not too tired or worried,' he explains. His male clientele used to be primarily homosexuals, and then metrosexuals. 'Now it's "ordinary" men, too. And, surprisingly, guys are asking for treatments younger than their female counterparts. Men are starting in their thirties and women in their forties.'

The facts about male cosmetic surgery are equally startling. In 2009 (according to statistics from the British Association of Aesthetic Surgeons), demand grew by 21 per cent among men. Male facelifts went up by nearly a

quarter; brow-lifts up 51 per cent; and moob jobs (male breast reduction) rose by a staggering 80 per cent.

'There may be no direct correlation between a man reducing his breasts and getting or retaining a job,' comments consultant plastic and aesthetic surgeon Raj Ragoowansi, who practises at Bart's Hospital and privately on Harley Street, London. (He has a specialist interest in gynecomastia — man-boob operations.) 'But it boosts the man's confidence and self-esteem, so it helps.' He pauses. 'The culture is changing. Cosmetic surgery for men is now perfectly acceptable and in London — as in Brazil and the USA — men now have to look the part to get where they want, socially and professionally.'

Mary Greenwell, make-up artist to Cate Blanchett and Uma Thurman (among other stars), helps men fight the economic downturn more gently: with cosmetics, at £1,500 a makeover. 'The most beautiful man I ever made up was David Beckham,' she says, adding that that was for a photoshoot rather than a job interview. 'Men are competing with and copying women. They don't want to look twenty years older than their female counterparts.' She smiles. 'Often people don't realise when men are wearing make-up, if it's applied properly. The only giveaway is when someone uses, say, khol to "enhance"

his eyes. It always shows. I tell men never to wear it in the boardroom.'

Men can work on themselves, too, rather than just receiving treatments and tucks. When the recession hit, The Third Space (a gym in London's West End, attracting many Mayfair businessmen) became the busiest it's ever been. In February, Holly Pannett, a personal trainer, started The Third Weigh, a pioneering twelve-week fitness programme based on changing body composition. (Cost: £2,500.) It includes nutrition, exercise, a weekly fruit and veg box, treatments such as colonics, and a Ki Fit medical device to measure sleep efficiency and perform nutrient analysis. 'We were amazed that 75 per cent of those doing it are men, mostly City boys,' says Holly. 'Mostly their aim is to lose their beer bellies and become more alert and ready to take on anything at work. They're all making serious changes, like dropping 12kg and 10 per cent body fat.'

One of her clients is a fortysomething JP Morgan investment banker. 'The workplace is getting younger and younger,' reveals this newly slimmed hunk. 'A few men in the office have had Botox. As you get older, it's increasingly important to look youthful and healthy. Doing this has upped my motivation and energy, having a positive impact on my work.' Another Holly client with a new body is Stefan Lindemann, 42, managing director of



Aladdin Capital Management. 'You have to be fit in order to be effective at work these days,' he concedes. 'I also did it because nowadays women want blokes to look good.'

The growing trend of men seeking physical perfection became so noticeable at top hairdressing salon Nicky Clarke — clients include Jonathan Ross, Kevin Spacey and Jeff Goldblum — that in March the celebrity hairdresser opened a private gents' grooming room in his London branch. (Amazingly, Nicky Clarke has also just started selling 'home dyeing kits' for £45 to the escalating numbers of men requesting that, er, their pubic hair matches that on their heads. Perhaps this offers the same psychological benefit as moob jobs.)

Nicky Clarke's signature colourist, Carl Dawson, is astonished to find that a quarter of his clients are now men — 'a lot of money-market men and big bands,' explains Carl, whose top price for men's colouring is £270. 'Competition is so fierce now, and a well-groomed man is better off because he exudes a sense of power.' Mike Dawson, 65, executive chauffeur at Churchwood, an exclusive car-hire firm, is one of Carl's clients. 'I get my hair dyed monthly,' says Mike. 'It makes me look ten years younger. Three of my colleagues and four of my regular clients do the same. We're all age-conscious.'

This brings us to men wishing to tackle wrinkly foreheads, crow's feet and suchlike. And so back to the business of surgery-lite. According to Mintel, non-surgical procedures in the UK (for both men and women) topped the million mark for the first time in 2009. 'Going under the knife has become less taboo,' comments a Mintel spokesperson. 'But for Brits, going under the syringe would now seem to be more apt.'

'Dracula' (£500) is one of Dr Sister's most popular treatments with men. 'I draw blood from the patient, separate the plasma and red cells and re-inject the plasma under the skin,' he explains. 'It revitalises the face or hands and, when injected in the head, promotes hair growth. There's no downtime or



bruising, no marks. So you can be back in the office straight away.'

Kyan Edwards, 31, is an architect designer. After having Botox, microdermabrasion, laser skin rejuvenation and the Dracula (platelet) treatment with Dr Sister, he says: 'Women want to look younger, which makes us men want to look fresher and not as stressed. We want to look confident and signal that we can cope with life and stress.'

Men are also reaching the menopause and now doing HRT. 'A man's DHEA [a steroid produced mainly by the adrenal glands] might drop hugely, due to stress,' says Dr Sister. 'Or his testosterone can be low. A man over 50 will have more female hormones in his body than a woman of the same age. Depending on what's replaced, his energy, sex drive or stress levels will change.' Overwhelmingly, such energised, newly young men want hair on their heads, not their backs. 'It used to be fashionable and virile to have chest hair. Now more and more men are requesting laser hair removal.'

But let us return to the hard-core approaches. Despite concern about money, demand for cosmetic surgery has been sustained during the crunch. The total market will reach an estimated

value of £2.3 billion in 2010. The top five cosmetic procedures for men are rhinoplasty (nose job), blepharoplasty (tired bag eyelids), breast reduction, otoplasty (ear correction) and liposuction (for a flat stomach).

Hugo Henderson, a consultant ophthalmic and oculoplastic surgeon in London, says no one wants tell-tale traces: 'Whatever their age, men share the same goal as women patients — they want to look younger without looking like they have had surgery, with scars hidden in the hairlines, skin creases or on the inside surface of the eyelid.'

At Millimetre Perfect, where Raj Ragoowansi practises, the face, necklift and eyelid tuck combination (around £12,000) is particularly popular. 'Using innovative and minimally invasive techniques, a facelift takes just four hours, leaving only a small scar hidden behind the back of the ears,' he reveals. 'Men no longer have to take off six weeks post-operatively — they can be back at their desk in five days.' Some, it has to be said, need extra recovery time in the same way they do when they have man flu.

Everyone knows that men spend more time in the bathroom these days. The male grooming market in the US is worth \$3.5 billion and, proportionally, Britain is following suit. So when a man's face starts to glow, he may simply be using La Prairie's top-selling boys' potion, Advance Marine Biology Cream (£111). Or it may be that he's rolling a skin-needling device over his face in the bathroom, puncturing the surface of the skin to produce collagen in order to rejuvenate his complexion. But when suddenly he turns up in the office with George Clooney eyelifts or a Gordon Brown brow... Well, with an ageing and youth-obsessed culture, surgical and other procedures can only continue to rise.

As we veer towards the second recession, it may not just be George Osborne making serious cuts. *f*

Mary Greenwell, Premier Hair and Make-up, tel: 020 7221 2333; Raj Ragoowansi practises at millimetreperfect.co.uk

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