

Pleasure and pain as cosmetic surgeon turns dreams into reality

# Beauty's cutting edge

Lucie Lan den Berg

IT'S Melbourne's own *Nip/Tuck*.

This is a rare insight into the customers and customs of a typical day with Toorak cosmetic plastic surgeon Dr Chris Moss at his Chris Moss Plastic Surgery and his Liberty Belle Skin Centre.

"Mikey's my bartender who says, 'You've had enough,'" regular customer Rick says, explaining how the impossibly beautiful nurses stop him turning into a "frozen face".

It's time for his tri-monthly top-up and he is practising his angry face.

At 44, the businessman is trying to keep up with all the fresh-faced Generation Ys rising through the ranks.

"In business it's competitive — people really do judge you on how you look," he says.

In the room next door, ex-smoker Belinda, is having a tiny needle full of filler — the stuff that makes babies' cheeks so plump — threaded through tiny lines around her mouth.

"You start on one area of the body," she giggles. "God knows where I am going to end up!"

Kath lies topless on a chair discussing how her new breasts are still shiny, eight days post-surgery.

"I was hell-bent that I wanted teardrop and I don't want round, but I'm rapt with them," she says.

In a typical day the two businesses see up to 40 patients for everything from laser treatments to rhinoplasty. The *Herald Sun* spoke to some of them.

**Belinda, ex-smoker, crows and dermal fillers around the lips, \$900**

THE middle-aged mental health worker is lying on her back as the first squirt of is injected into her crow's feet. She winces: "It does make your eyes water."

No-nonsense nurse Lisa wields the needle like a quill.

"There is a bit of artistry in in keeping your expression alive," she says.

Belinda gave up smoking almost nine years ago.

"I smoked loads and loads of low-nicotine cigarettes," she says.

"You suck the bejesus out of them and get wrinkly lips.

"I promised myself I'd get rid of them, as a present."

Five injections dull any feeling before the filler is injected into lines around her mouth.

Lisa warns she will look worse before she looks better: "You know what it's like when you just hit your lip on the car door and it just blows up."

Belinda sighs: "The things we go through, hey."

**Grace, office worker, 22, rhinoplasty, \$13,000**

IT'S been four months since she had the bump removed from her nose.

"I've wanted to have it done since I was 15," she says.

Dr Moss schedules a follow-up appointment.

**Kath, media worker, 25, breast augmentation, \$15,000**

"I'VE been wanting to get them done since I was 16," she says eight days after breast augmentation surgery.

The pretty blonde says she didn't hate her A-cup breasts. "They were just small," she says.

Dr Moss inspects his handiwork.

"They are sore," Kath admits, "like I've done a huge gym workout."

"The incisions will be



**No pain, no gain:** (clockwise from above) nurse Lisa Duane prepares an injection; Vanessa gets laser treatment; Ms Duane with a needle; surgeon Chris Moss checks a patient's nose job. Pictures: MARK SMITH



**THE BOOM IN COSMETICS**

- Australians consume nearly a quarter of a million wrinkle reduction procedures with botulinum toxin (ie and Dysport) each year.
- Cosmetic surgery clinics are estimated to have grown up 10-20 per cent in 2010.
- Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery members carry out about 15,000 liposuction procedures annually.
- Total annual expenditure on cosmetic surgical and medical procedures in Australia is estimated to be up to \$1 billion.

*Estimated figures from Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery*

almost invisible over time," Dr Moss says of the marks under each breast where the implants have been inserted. Kath had trouble deciding on her size. "Chris put a 250ml in one side and a 275ml in the other — he didn't tell which was which, but he noticed I was smiling a bit more when I looked in the mirror looking at the bigger size." They are still swollen and a

little bit shiny, but Dr Moss explains this is normal at this stage of post-surgery.

**Rick, video production worker, 46, \$300**

"ANGRY face and relax, angry again," Mike says to Rick, trying to gauge which muscles move.

Rick has been coming here for almost two years.

"It was sparked by turning 44 and not feeling as confident as I used to when I look in the mirror.

"I have devil horns — we've tried to get rid of them. They are the ones I obsess over."

Mike reminds him they are caused by him rolling in his sleep and squashing his face.

He gets a squirt of in his right eyebrow and a top-up around his eyes.

"I just do whatever he tells me," Rick says. "I'm definitely never going to be the person who gets so much they can't move their face."

**Anna, middle-aged wife, initial facelift/necklift and blepharoplasty (eyes) consultation, \$500**

"THE left-hand side of my face appears to age quicker than the right-hand side," she says.

She wants "an overall refreshed appearance, to erase the deeper lines", and is concerned about "hooding" in her upper eyelids.

She is worried that if she has one part of her face done, the rest of it will need work.

"It's a bit like when you walk through a freshly painted house, but they have forgotten to paint one room."

Dr Moss says the aim is to "get your facial appearance back to where your mind is".

They move into a small room and stand in front of a mirror.

"We need to lift your jowl back up on to your cheeks, remove the fat under here with a bit of liposuction, and lift it across here," he says.

"A good facelift is one your friends shouldn't notice."