

Combining Skin Care and Repair

Skin cancer care and plastic surgery combined with single doctor visit for better health and beauty and reduced medical costs and recovery time.

By **ANN VOGEL**
FOR THE KITSAP SUN

For years, 65-year-old Melissa Jarvis (not her real name) had been considering an eyelid lift. When her doctor told her she had an area of skin cancer on her face, she decided to turn lemons into lemonade. She chose Justin Piasecki, M.D., to remove the cancerous cells, perform plastic surgery to ensure the surgical site healed without a scar, and do her eyelid lift — all in one visit to his Harbor Plastic Surgery Center in Gig Harbor.

She learned that Dr. Piasecki is one of only seven physicians in the world who is board certified in plastic and reconstructive surgery and also fellowship trained in Mohs micrographic surgery. He is the only one who is also a facial plastic surgeon. Dr. Piasecki has the credentials and experience to do Mohs surgery, which is the best way to remove skin cancer, reconstructive surgery, which gives the best cosmetic result, and the elective cosmetic surgery she desired. It was an easy decision for her to choose Dr. Piasecki for her procedures.

Dermatologists trained in Mohs are not trained in the plastic surgery that reduces the risks of disfiguring scars, and they are not trained in cosmetic surgery such as eyelifts and facelifts.

"Skin cancer is typically removed by a 'Mohs surgeon,' a dermatologist (skin specialist) who has completed a one-year fellowship in Mohs micrographic surgery," explained Dr. Piasecki. "That training includes basic skin training, but not general or plastic surgery training. Mohs surgeons either



Dr. Justin Piasecki

stitch together the wound without the use of plastic surgery techniques, or send the patient to a plastic surgeon for repair. This means an additional consult, an operating room visit and, in the end, follow-up visits with two physicians, which can be more costly and inconvenient for patients."

With his training and board certifications, Dr. Piasecki is pioneering plastic micrographic surgery, which is Mohs surgery for cancer with immediate cosmetic reconstruction. This is the most cosmetically pleasing, convenient and cost effective treatment of skin cancer available.

Mohs surgery is 99.2 percent effective for the most common form of skin cancer. The surgery involves removing small slices of cancerous skin and then cutting until the margins around the cancerous site show no cancerous cells when viewed under a high-powered microscope.

Jarvis chose Dr. Piasecki to perform Mohs surgery on her cancer because he can also

ABOUT DR. JUSTIN PIASECKI

Dr. Piasecki is a board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon who has completed both an ACGME-accredited plastic surgery residency and an ACMS-accredited Mohs surgery fellowship. He is an active member of the American College of Mohs Surgery and the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

After graduating from Stanford University with honors, Dr. Piasecki attended Vanderbilt Medical School — finishing at the top of his class in the AOA honor society, completed a five-year plastic and reconstructive surgery residency at the University of Wisconsin with multiple local and national awards, and then a Mohs surgery fellowship at the University of British Columbia, training under some of the most respected dermatopathologists in North America. He is also a recognized and respected facial plastic surgeon, scoring in the 96th percentile on the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery board examination.

He took a two-year leave of absence from medical school to compete on the U.S. National sprint kayaking team and was ranked No. 4 in the world, winning gold medals at the Pan Am Games, World Cup and at the U.S. National Championships. He still loves paddling the waters of the Puget Sound, recreationally.

perform the minor cosmetic surgery she wanted, all on the same day. This not only saved her time, but also saved her 30-40 percent over having one dermatologist do the Mohs surgery and then scheduling an appointment with a plastic surgeon to do the reconstructive surgery on the cancer site. Even her elective eyelid surgery was discounted 30 percent.

The result was a cancer-free face, no scar from the Mohs surgery, a more youthful and refreshed face because of the eyelid lift, and the convenience of spending only one day at the clinic during the out-patient procedures. She also was glad to recover from both surgeries during only one period of time.

Dr. Piasecki's Harbor Plastic Surgery Center is conveniently and discreetly located in Gig Harbor's Milgard Medical Pavilion adjacent to St. Anthony's Hospital. His practice also houses the Skin Cancer Center and a Medicare-certified op-

erating room for the cosmetic and reconstructive surgeries.

With an operating room on site, Dr. Piasecki performs general facial and body cosmetic surgery such as breast augmentations, tummy tucks (abdominoplasty), armlifts, necklifts, browlifts, and nose and ear surgeries.

Lisa Davenport, RN, performs injectibles, fillers, lasers and sclerotherapy (vein treatment). She is the only regional trainer on Dysport, Restylane and Perlane and Cutera lasers. When not performing treatments, she assists Dr. Piasecki in the operating room with cosmetic and skin cancer surgery. Dr. Piasecki and his staff pride themselves on providing individualized attention and care.

As word spreads that the Mohs skin cancer procedure and plastic surgery can be combined into one visit with one highly skilled and credentialed doctor, patients have flown in from Europe and

See Piasecki | Page 31

Piasecki | Same Stop Office Provides Cost Savings

From page 9

driven from Canada to have Dr. Piasecki perform Plastic Micrographic Surgery at his Gig Harbor clinic.

"Patients appreciate the convenience of having their cancer cured and reconstructed in the same day," Dr. Piasecki said. "It is more efficient and ends up being ironically less expensive for patients and insurance companies because there is a single provider performing both surgeries. There is no extra cost for the additional training, skill and expertise patients receive from me. The goal is the best cure, and the finest reconstruction in the safest environment. It's a real win-win."

Along with the Mohs surgery for their cancer, some patients choose to have a brow lift, a mini facelift, or one of many other minor facial cosmetic surgery procedures.

The Skin Cancer Center

A visit at The Skin Cancer Center starts with a comprehensive pre-operative exam where Dr. Piasecki and the patient discuss all available treatment options. "Surgery is not always the best treatment choice for every patient," commented Piasecki. "We don't



Dr. Justin Piasecki scrubs up in preparation for an out-patient procedure at his Gig Harbor office.

Photo courtesy of Scott Turner

operate if we don't need to, and we won't operate if there is a better treatment option available. I present all the options to the patient first, and we decide together which is best for them."

Those other treatment options are offered through a referral network within the Milgard Medical Pavilion, and include simple excision, liquid nitrogen, scraping and burn-

ing, and radiation. Dr. Piasecki also offers biopsies for patients who have suspect lesions. Patients can have biopsies within two days of requesting an appointment, and get next day results.

Family and Community are Focus of Clinic

Harbor Plastic Surgery Center is a family-owned and family-centered business

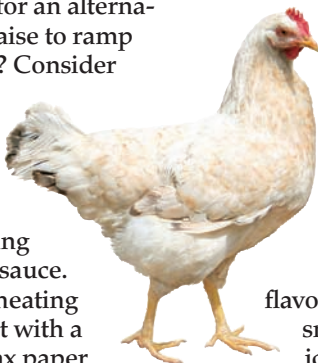
dedicated to its community. "The medical practice is the heart and soul of our family, along with our three young daughters," said Jill Piasecki, a healthcare consultant and medical office administrator.

For more information about the services offered by the Harbor Plastic Surgery Center and its Skin Cancer Center, see www.harborplasticsurgerycenter.com or call (253) 858-5040.

Food Tips | Ways to make Food Preparation Easier

20. Looking for an alternative to mayonnaise to ramp up sandwiches? Consider spreadable goat cheese or other soft cheeses, ranch or Caesar salad dressing or horseradish sauce.

21. When reheating chicken, cover it with a loose tent of wax paper to prevent it from drying out.



22. Don't reserve deli meats just for sandwiches. Remember them for salads, too. Almost anything that's good for sandwich fixings can be piled on lettuce.

23. To boost the flavor in your homemade smoothie, use flavored ice pops instead of ice cubes. Look for the no-sugar variety to keep calories

and added sugar to a minimum.

24. Soak raw onions in salt-water to remove some of their bite before adding to salads or other cold dishes.

25. To soften cookies that have become hard, put a slice of bread into the cookie jar with them, or if

you're storing them in a zipper-lock bag, add the bread there.



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