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News

Procedure eliminates need for rhinoplasty

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For 15 years, Debra Levy says she felt self-conscious whenever she was out in public, wondering if anyone was looking at her nose.

Now, Levy said she finally is satisfied after undergoing a procedure on her nose in which she was injected with Radiesse, a product for non-surgical nasal correction. She received the injection in July from Boca Raton plastic surgeon Hilton Becker of Boca Raton.

She said another attempt to have her nose reconstructed failed. Levy said that she had what is termed by plastic surgeons a "scooped" nose. She recalled explaining to her previous doctor that she wanted a straight nose, but

he ended up removing too much bone from the top of her nose.

But after that initial surgery, the tip of her nose pointed upward and the "scoop," or open space along the bridge of her nose, became very visible in her profile.

Levy said she had heard about Becker's technique through friends. They met and he told her he could give her a straight nose in just five minutes, the amount of time it took to administer anesthesia and then the injection of Radiesse.

After he injected her with Radiesse, the scoop in her nose was filled in.

Looking in the mirror after the procedure with a big grin on her face, Levy stared at her straight nose with satisfaction.

"It's just what I wanted;



THE NOSE KNOWS: Debra Levy is shown in the left photo before she has the Radiesse procedure. Right photo, Levy after the Radiesse was injected into the bridge of her nose.

Left photo, submitted. Right photo, staff photo/Markus Shaban-Markis

what a difference!" Levy said.

Radiesse is a white gel made of calcium hydroxyapatite which looks like real bone under a microscope. Becker said he has been using the product for two years, correcting irregular-

ities of the nose and in reconstructive breast surgery to project a woman's nipple.

According to Radiesse manufacturer BioForm Medical's Web site, Radiesse has been cleared for three uses in the United

States, including oral and facial defects.

The substance "acts as a scaffold for tissue and it doesn't migrate," Becker said explaining that Radiesse can fill in an empty space where bone is taken out and it won't move to other parts of the face.

Becker said the body's own natural tissue grows into the spongy Radiesse and that in the last two years his patients have been satisfied with results of the procedure. In the past, correcting such irregularities would require surgery and a painful recovery.

"Normally they take cartilage or bone from elsewhere" in the body, Becker said explaining procedures in which Radiesse is not used.

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Since Radiesse is absorbed into the body, a patient may have to return for a second or even a third injection.

Depending on the individual, one injection may last three to six months and one cubic centimeter of Radiesse costs about \$1,000.

After the initial injection, Becker said patients typically need about half the amount of the first one. Such touch-ups cost \$500.

Another of Becker's patients, Nancy Monperousse of Miami, had a slight bump that showed in her profile. She wanted a thinner and straighter nose, without a bump.

"I did some research, met [Dr. Becker] and that was it," Monperousse said just before her injection.

Five minutes later, the procedure was finished and she stood up with a smile. Looking at her nose, she said the only pain she felt was during the injection of anesthesia.

"I feel just fine," she said as she looked in the mirror.