Reconstructive Facial Plastic Surgery

A Problem-Solving Manual

von
Hilko Weerda

1. Auflage

Thieme 2001

Verlag C.H. Beck im Internet:
www.beck.de
ISBN 978 3 13 129641 2
Foreword

As president of the European Academy of Facial Plastic Surgery I have the pleasure and privilege to write a foreword in this textbook on plastic reconstructive surgery of the face. This practical step-by-step surgical guide was written by professor Hilko Weerda, who is particularly well-known worldwide for his auricular reconstruction techniques and is also an expert in facial plastic reconstructive surgery and teaching. This book is well illustrated with bicolour drawings and is easily accessible with clear compact text and very instructive step-by-step illustrations of the various techniques. The basics of facial surgery are covered in the first part of the book and more advanced defect closure techniques in various regions in the second part. With the supplementary chapters by the co-authors St. Remmert and K. Sommer on myocutaneous island flaps, deltopectoral flaps, and free microvascular transplants, this book covers the most contemporary techniques in plastic and reconstructive surgery of the face.

This practical guide will be of great help to the neophyte facial plastic surgeon but will also be of interest to more experienced surgeons due to the huge amount of information it contains on the various technical solutions for facial defects. Professor Hilko Weerda and his co-authors have to be congratulated on this vital and practical guide to facial plastic surgery, which hopefully will stimulate the further development of high quality facial plastic and reconstructive surgery in our ENT speciality throughout Europe.

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Balancing the twin needs of functional and aesthetic facial defect reconstruction has challenged surgeons over the centuries to develop practical and utilitarian repair solutions. Professor Hilko Weerda, in typical meticulous fashion, presents in this text atlas a virtual encyclopaedia of reconstructive options for the thoughtful repair of a wide-ranging group of facial, head, and neck defects. The multiple options and alternatives available for defect repair and reconstruction presented in this volume have met the test of time world-wide.

Reconstruction in the head and neck region requires an education to meticulous planning. Facial plastic and reconstructive surgery is, in its finest sense, a craft best developed over time and seasoned with experience. The thought process required in the planning of facial repair probably supercedes the technical skill involved in the surgical event itself. Techniques highly useful and indicated in one region of the face may not serve well for adjacent regions. Skin thickness, skin mobility, the presence of hair-bearing structures, and the junctions of facial landmarks must all be considered when the most appropriate surgical option is chosen. A tissue price is paid (by the patient) whenever regional tissues are advanced, rotated, transposed, or interposed to reconstruct defects—scarring, distortion, and asymmetries of the donor as well as the recipient site are ever-present possibilities. The surgeon's critical responsibility is to diminish the amount of that price to be paid by employing the correct reconstructive option. Given our present state of knowledge, the majority of challenging facial repairs should produce a functionally useful and aesthetically admirable outcome. As the brilliant reconstructive surgeon Gary Burget states: “the eye does not perceive cover, lining or support. It sees a pattern of graduated light and shadow ... color, texture and most importantly contour create the visual image ...”.

Professor Weerda has succeeded admirably in authoring a comprehensive compendium designed to aid the reconstructive surgeon in assessing the various options and alternatives for facial repair.

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Preface

Particularly in this age of mass media, the face plays a pivotal role in human self-identification. Malformations, defects, and bony or soft-tissue changes caused by trauma or neoplasms can drastically alter the patient’s appearance, frequently impacting on his or her feeling of self-worth. Drawing on our experience in the operating room and our many years of planning and conducting courses in plastic and reconstructive surgery, we have created an easy-to-use, step-by-step surgical textbook for the face and neck based on informative illustrations and concise text. Sequences of drawings provide both the novice and the experienced facial surgeon with simple, reproducible solutions to many of the most commonly encountered problems and questions in facial plastic surgery.

Along with the most commonly practiced reconstructive procedures, a number of other proposed technical solutions are presented largely without commentary. I express thanks to my colleagues St. Remmert and K. Sommer for their contributions on myocutaneous flaps and free tissue transfers. I thank Mrs. Böhm for the immense typing work and Mrs. Schumacher for providing the drawings, which consistently conformed to the author’s wishes. I also thank Dr. Bergman, Mrs. Müller-Baji, Mr. Krüger, and Thieme Publishers for their outstanding work in the production of this book.

Lübeck, summer 2001

H. Weerda