

## GENITAL AESTHETICIAN

## DESIGNING DOWN UNDER

BY REKHA DIXIT

**M**ohan Thomas's clinic on a leafy Bandra street sees a motley clientele: age-battling socialites seeking facelifts, middling men wanting to get rid of moobs and upcoming starlets wanting their noses sharper, lips poutier and breasts bigger.

Aesthetics, however, are increasingly shifting south, with clients wanting designer genitalia. Earlier, below-the-belt focus was on functional needs (vaginoplasty to tighten a vagina rendered loose by age and parturition) or social ones (hymenoplasty before marriage to recreate chastity long lost). The demand has changed. Now the client not only wants the goods down under to be in good working condition, they should also look visually appealing.

Thomas, a cosmetic surgeon, has super-specialised as a genital surgical aesthetician; he is one among the handful of such experts in the country. "Looking good is a big image booster and this is the demand of the age," he says, as he explains how he uses fat and stem cells liposuctioned, usually from the abdomen, and injects them in phases at various layers of the mons. The aim is to trap these cells in various tissue beds so that they plump up the volume and tauten drooping wares. "Since these are living cells from the same person, they are very effective and have minimal side effects, unlike collagen. I did my first such procedure eight years ago, so I know that the effects last for at least eight years."

Thomas explains that most of female genital aesthetic improvement is through such injections, though there may be "some tailoring required



'Inside' job: Mohan Thomas is among the handful of genital surgical aestheticians in India

JANAK BHAT

for those who want trimmer inner labia". There is also G-spot enhancement, though the Indian clients for this are very few. In the men's section, there are penile enhancements and scrotal sac tuckings to choose from.

Doesn't it bother him to be spending so much time and effort on frivolous procedures when there is such a crying need for proper medical care in the country? "No it doesn't," says Thomas. "From a layperson's viewpoint, this work may seem weird. But look at it from a person who has poor self-image. I had a patient seeking penile enhancement because he was traumatised at the thought of getting married while possessing below-average parts. He came with his cousin for consultation. Today he is happily married."

He points out that with longer life expectancies, people are sexually active for longer, and is there any harm in seeking rejuvenation?

"I have people in all age groups, from youngsters and middle-aged ones to even senior citizens, many come as couples. If they want to improve conjugal relations, why shouldn't I help?" Yet, he follows a policy of a 30-day cool-off period for clients to decide whether they still wish to go ahead with the surgery. He also has a psychiatrist on the panel, to deal with issues that come from body image consciousness.

Thomas says it was only a matter of time before aesthetics shifted from the salon to the surgery. Brazilian waxes are fine at the parlour, but for anything more, clients cannot go to beauticians. They need surgeons. "So it is better they come here, where they'll get proper treatment, than go to semi-qualified people." The cost for all this? It varies from ₹60,000 to ₹1.5 lakh, depending on the add-on services one opts for. Not much for a plumper, rejuvenated you, is it? ●