



Michele A. Shermak, *Body Contouring*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010.

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Body Contouring, by Dr. Michele A. Shermak, is part of the "Plastic Surgery Atlas" series from McGraw-Hill Medical publishers. The book has a total of 50 chapters distributed among seven sections in a short 264 pages. Section 1 serves as the introduction and comprises six chapters that cover general topics such as safety, positioning, psychosocial issues, medications to avoid, massive weight loss, and complication management. The other 44 chapters are divided among the remaining six sections, which respectively cover body contouring in the upper extremities, female breast, gynecomastia, abdomen, back, and lower extremities. Sections 2 to 7, dealing with the operative procedures, follow the same pattern as Section 1 and are well organized. Each section begins with a chapter that discusses the usual patient presentation for body contouring in that particular anatomical area, and the author provides relevant examples. The second chapter in each section includes a color plate illustrating the pertinent anatomy. These drawings are highly detailed, anatomically accurate, and relevant to the procedures covered in that section. The rest of the chapters in each section discuss the different contouring procedure options. Each procedural chapter has concise text describing the procedure, accompanied by medical illustrations and followed by photographs depicting relevant cases. Although the text volume is minimal, it follows an organized and logical sequence that includes an introduction, indications, markings, details of the procedure, postoperative care, pitfalls, and tips for each anatomical area.

In total, the atlas covers 32 different body contouring procedures. Most of the techniques described are generally accepted by the plastic surgery community and are not

considered controversial, although the author occasionally injects some personal preference bias into the details of the procedure and postoperative care suggestions. Accommodating 50 chapters with numerous illustrations and photographs into only 264 pages meant that the written word had to be limited. It is here that Dr. Shermak did an exemplary job of providing the reader with the salient features of each procedure in an extremely concise and organized accompanying text. The drawings by medical illustrator Bill Winn are simple but accurate. The accompanying figure legend allows the reader to easily follow the steps of each procedure. The procedure chapters include relevant pre- and postoperative photographic examples. The photography, however, was not standardized, and many of the clinical photos display different backgrounds, focal distances, clothing, and lighting schemes between the pre- and postoperative images, which made it difficult to evaluate the outcomes with any true comparisons. On several occasions, having the pre- and postoperative photos on different pages made the photographic comparisons even more difficult.

Of all the surgical procedure sections, I found the section on gynecomastia to be the most complete and comprehensive. Surgical approaches to different variations of this condition were covered in detail. Chapter 23 covers gynecomastia liposuction, and it is interesting to note that although the author mentions the advantages of ultrasound-assisted liposuction (UAL), no details are given as to the type of UAL device or recommended ultrasound energy settings. The chapter on back liposuction also mentions UAL as an option but again fails to discuss the type of device and recommended energy settings. Most surgeons familiar with the new-generation UAL devices and fat grafting would take issue with Dr. Shermak's comment

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that UAL traumatizes adipocytes harvested for grafting purposes, and the same is true for her recommendation of large-caliber cannulas for treatment of the posterior trunk. If I could make one addition to the liposuction chapters, it would be a description of the current technologies available in liposuction and recommendations for their use. These devices are an integral part of many current body contouring techniques. Chapter 15, on liposuction of the breast, mentions suction-assisted liposuction and power-assisted liposuction as recommended techniques but states that UAL should not be performed on the breast due to a theoretically-increased risk of cancer. Many accomplished body contouring experts routinely utilize the new-generation UAL devices for breast liposuction. There have been large series of patients treated safely over many years to support the use of this modality in breast liposuction.

I believe this atlas will be most relevant to residents and novice plastic surgeons with limited exposure to body contouring techniques. It can also serve as a quick review in preparation for an infrequently-performed body contouring case. The information in Section 1 (Chapters 1–6), which addresses patient safety, psychosocial issues, and expectation management in body contouring, is invaluable to the novice surgeon.

There is an accompanying CD that contains video of some common body contouring procedures, including abdominoplasty and thigh lift, Wise-pattern breast lift with autoaugmentation, vertical breast reduction, lower bodylift,

and upper backlift. A major shortcoming of the video is the lack of an audible commentary; it is strictly a visual display that does not follow the general outline of the atlas. The video lighting is substandard and contains shadow artifacts as a result of the surgeon's headlight. In short, I did not find the video to be a useful complement to the book. Future versions would benefit from an audio narrative and a method of organizing the videos that matches the text sequence.

Again, many residents as well as young plastic surgeons entering private practice have had limited experience in body contouring, and I would certainly recommend this book to them. As an atlas, it serves the purpose of providing a well-illustrated book of "recipes" for the most commonly performed body contouring procedures. Rather than being a reference book, this is designed as a "how I do it" text, and it meets that goal. Embarking on a single-authorship book describing 32 different body contouring surgical procedures is a monumental task, and Dr. Shermak has been successful in this accomplishment. I expect many young plastic surgeons to benefit from this atlas, in particular from the wisdom the author imparts at the end of every chapter under pitfalls and tips.

Disclosures

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