

MIND
your
BODY

The Pro

MYB speaks to health professionals

Dr Yeak Hwee Lee, 46, is medical director of the Singapore Aesthetic Centre and a sports enthusiast. She tells ZUREENA HABIB why her work makes her happy

I decided to take a special interest in aesthetics because...

I feel privileged to be able to help my patients create a better first impression, to increase their chances of succeeding in a job interview or to get that edge in life. It does not just involve making a patient look better. It also helps him or her feel better.

I come across all types of cases from...

Those involving medical management of disfiguring acne to rejuvenation of skin in older patients.

The face is fascinating because...

We are all uniquely different. The requirements for facial engineering varies from individual to individual. However, a healthy complexion is always a boon.

Also in the age of increasing longevity, we do not want to just live longer, we want to look better, feel better and age gracefully, perhaps a little more slowly too.

A typical day for me would be...

Seeing some young students and housewives in the day and the working crowd in the evening or during lunch hour when they can come in for some quick fixes such as IPL or Botox.

My typical work day ends at about 7.30pm. Then, I get home and have a meal with my husband, an anaesthetist, and our four children, three boys and a girl aged seven to 15.

Family time is important to me. I like to keep channels of communication open with my children. We cycle together in our neighbourhood and public parks and my husband plays football with the kids.

I taught aerobics at the YMCA when I was an undergraduate. Now I attend classes. I love body jam (a hip hop dance form).

If I were to give an analogy for what I do, I'd be a...

Friend or confidante. I share secrets on how to look better and occasionally the patient shares little snippets of her life with me.

I love patients who are...

Realistic in what they hope to achieve aesthetically. An older woman undergoing skin rejuvenation only wants to look as good as she can for her age.



ST PHOTO: ASHLEIGH SIM

Dr Yeak feels a sense of achievement helping her patients look and feel better.

Patients who get my goat are...

Patients with unrealistic expectations of improvement –like wanting to look like their favourite movie star.

One little known fact about aesthetics or problems relating to it is...

Many medical signs can be detected on the face. A sallow or dull complexion may be due to anaemia and puffy eyelids due to hypothyroidism. Nothing should be treated too lightly.

Things that put a smile on my face are...

An example that comes to mind would be a patient who got that SIA cabin crew job because her skin now looks better. She is able to socialise normally because her bad acne has cleared up.

It breaks my heart when...

A woman trying to look her best to salvage her

marriage loses the battle.

I would not trade places for the world because...

Though aesthetic treatment may address a "superficial" problem, the change in physical appearance may have a deeper implication.

The joy of seeing a patient getting back on track in life, such as getting re-employed or clinching that dream career is indeed a gratifying experience..

My best tip...

Maintain a healthy lifestyle. Keep to a healthy weight.

Exercise regularly, at least three times a week, to increase your functional capacity and, most importantly, stay positive.

Be happy. Find a passion in life; stay engaged.

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