

Michael Moses, MD, FACS

Plastic Surgery at Moses Plastic Surgery and
Children's Hospital

As a college student at Yale University, Michael Moses contemplated a career as an architect before ultimately pursuing medicine, specifically plastic surgery.

"Plastic surgery has the same dichotomy of form versus function," he said. "But the stakes are different, and I love people."

Over the course of his 37-year-career, Moses has operated on thousands of patients.

"Most people have assumed that plastic surgeons were either reconstructive surgeons or cosmetic surgeons, as if the two categories were mutually exclusive," he said. "I've always wanted to do both, and to be both. I still love doing cleft lip and palate surgery at Children's Hospital, and I love my aesthetic practice."

He finds equal satisfaction in doing a cleft lip surgery as he does a facelift. "I think both worlds exist because of the same premise," he said. "If someone is uncomfortable with their appearance and we can safely, reliably and predictably operate on them to make them comfortable in their own skin, then that is a success. This is as true for those with birth defects as for those that want to look younger, thinner and sexier."

He says his toughest cases are the emotional ones, not the technical ones.

"There have been several times when I've been asked to see a newborn baby to repair their cleft lip or palate, and I've examined the baby and realized that there is a lot more wrong with the child than just their cleft," he said.

"Explaining this to anxious parents, and sometimes telling them that cleft repair isn't indicated because of the long-term prognosis for the child is heart-wrenching."

Moses noted that he would rather perform the most difficult surgery "a thousand times over" than having these difficult conversations with families. "We surgeons are human, too. Sometimes we just have to hug families, wipe away tears, and help everyone do the best they can." — Sarah Ravits

Undergraduate: Yale University
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