

# suburban life

A local woman details her journey and dramatic transformation, with help from Dr. Robert Skalicky of **Modern Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.**

page 30

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Jennifer Mermoud, illustrating how significantly her life has changed after her weight loss and follow-up procedures

# Inspired Results

A local woman details her journey and dramatic transformation, with help from Dr. Skalicky of **Modern Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.**

**I**N MOST WAYS, JENNIFER MERMOUD IS STILL THE SAME PERSON SHE WAS EIGHT YEARS AGO: articulate, passionate, fun loving, and able to make friends everywhere she goes. In other ways, she is remarkably different. She's more than 300 pounds lighter, for example. "I had stopped caring about myself and let myself go," says Mermoud, a 35-year-old resident

of Robbinsville, New Jersey. "When I was pregnant with my first daughter in 2007, I was reaching 400 pounds. I had never let my weight bother me, but the real eye opener was when I would watch my husband and mother do things with my family that I couldn't do." At her heaviest, Mermoud weighed more than 500 pounds. In 2012, she had bariatric surgery,



which helped her lose 150 pounds. Two years later, when she had her second daughter, she gained only 11 pounds during her pregnancy. Losing weight became a “mental game.” She joined Weight Watchers and hit the gym hard, but there were certain aspects of her slimmed-down body that not even diet and exercise could amend.

“The problem when you lose a lot of weight is that you have a lot of excess sagging skin,” she says. “That’s something you’re not really prepared for, and it can have a big effect on your life.”

Mermoud reached out to friends for suggestions as to who might be able to help. As it turned out, a friend who had had similar issues enjoyed a life-changing surgical result from a man named Robert Skalicky, D.O. Dr. Skalicky, a board-certified plastic surgeon and the founder of Modern Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, specializes in delicate surgical techniques to enhance the face, breast, and body—including body lifts after the kind of massive weight loss Mermoud experienced.

“I found out he was an expert in this,” Mermoud says. “He removed the excess skin on my thighs, arms, and stomach. Once that happened, I felt like a different person.”

The specific surgical techniques utilized by Dr. Skalicky included thigh lift, brachioplasty (removal of arm skin), augmentation mastopexy (breast lift with breast implants), and Fleur-de-Lis abdominoplasty (a special type of tummy tuck that removes abdominal skin in both the horizontal and vertical direction). These four surgical procedures are a common combination after extensive weight loss and necessary to restore normal body contour.

“Weight loss can be a bittersweet scenario for patients,” Dr. Skalicky says. “They accomplish so much with their weight-loss journey, but are discouraged by the excess skin that develops throughout the body after the weight has disappeared. Restoration of an acceptable body image usually requires removal of the skin laxity through an individualized surgical plan.”

Dr. Skalicky felt inspired by Mermoud’s journey. In fact, he decided she was an ideal candidate to benefit from the efforts of a comprehensive “transformation team.” In years past, he worked with allied professionals—Robert D. Marus, D.D.S., AAACD, an accredited cosmetic dentist based in Yardley, and David J. Witchell, owner of the famed Newtown salon and spa that bears his name—to provide a select few patients with complete makeovers.

“Jennifer is a great person who had already come such a long way, and I was happy to play a part in her journey,” Dr. Skalicky says. “I greatly respected what she had accomplished, so I thought a total makeover would help her continue in her quest to improve her life and build her confidence.”

Dr. Marus, for his part, remembers Mer-



**Before**



**After**

**After her dramatic weight loss, Mermoud had “a lot of excess sagging skin” and other aspects of her body she wanted to change. These images show her results before and after the surgical techniques performed by Dr. Skalicky.**

moud being “very concerned” about her smile. Her front teeth had excessive crowding, and one tooth was significantly darker than the others due to a past injury that damaged the nerve. Also, she wanted a brighter smile overall, which he helped her address by prescribing take-home whitening trays.

“Her smile was a big issue she wanted to manage,” he says. “To manage the darkened tooth, I have a special technique I’ve been doing for 25 years, working from inside and outside the tooth, completely with bonding, to get it to look like the other teeth.”

Past makeovers have culminated in a highly publicized “reveal,” but the pandemic has left Mermoud’s final reveal up in the air. Before too long, she expects to have her time in the chair

at David J. Witchell Salon, where expert stylists and makeup artists, along with David and Galina Witchell, will treat her to a hair, makeup, and wardrobe makeover. In the meantime, she’s grateful for the people who helped her along the way.

“My personal inspirations are my husband, Benoit, who has seen and supported me through this entire journey mentally and physically, as well as my two daughters Juliette and Sophia,” she says. “When I was at my heaviest I was just trying to survive, but now I am thriving and loving life, along with the many adventures we do and memories we make together.”

“I want [each of my girls] to learn from my journey and to take care of herself and to love herself no matter what,” she continues. “I have always told my girls that there are rules to follow to be healthy, happy, and safe. My oldest daughter saw everything I have had to go through, so I hope she understands how important it is to make the right choices.”

Like many people who have undergone dramatic transformations, Mermoud often looks back on pictures of her former self and reflects on her journey. Arriving at a healthier weight has led to some positive outcomes apart from her outward appearance; she’s no longer pre-diabetic, for example, and she has reduced her risk of heart disease and high blood pressure, both of which run in her family.

“Benoit and Dr. Skalicky will tell you that I only changed physically, however my personality has stayed the same throughout this entire experience,” she says. “That’s extremely important to me because I want my daughters to know it’s not what you look like on the outside that matters; it’s how they are on the inside and how they treat others.”

“I am happier, honestly—mentally and physically,” she continues. “To be able to fully experience life is the biggest thing for me. I can go into a store and try on clothes I like. I can go on rides with my children. I’m experiencing things with them I never would have before. I’m more adventurous. I never realized how much my weight was holding me back.” ■



## **Modern Aesthetic Plastic Surgery**

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