

# Like mother, like daughter, at least around the eyes

October 28 2009, by Lin Edwards

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(PhysOrg.com) -- New research suggests the old saying commonly told to husbands-to-be is true, that if you want to know what your wife will look like, look at her mother.

A group of plastic surgeons from the Loma Linda University Medical Center in California scanned the faces of mothers and their daughters. They found that the daughters' faces were beginning to sag, wrinkle, thin, and lose elasticity around the eyes in exactly the same patterns as their mothers' faces, with the effect becoming more noticeable after daughters reached their mid 30s.

One of the surgeons, Dr Matthew Camp, said the study was the first to prove scientifically that [women age](#) like their mothers. Until now, Camp said, studies of facial aging have mostly been subjective and

observational.

The team studied ten similar looking mother/daughter pairs ranging in age from 15 to 90, using facial imaging and 3-D computer modeling. The most pronounced similarities of sagging and loss of volume occurred around the tear ducts and the lower eyelids, which are areas where loss of elasticity and slackening of muscles is common as people age.

As a face ages and the lower eyelid muscles slacken, the fat beneath the [skin](#) tends to bulge out, causing "bags" under the eyes. A loss of elasticity results in loose skin accumulating as folds in the upper eyelids and creases under the eyes. According to a leading British facelift surgeon, Norman Waterhouse, past president of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, aging in women's faces is more noticeable because women's faces change from oval to square as the skin sags, whereas men's [faces](#) tend to be square even when they are younger. A facelift is designed to offset the effect.

The American researchers said their results may be a useful aid for cosmetic surgery on the [eye](#) region, which is one of the commonest cosmetic surgery procedures. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPA) figures suggest surgery on the eyelids was the fourth most common plastic surgery operation in 2008.

One of the authors of the study, Dr Subhas Gupta, said that knowing exactly how a woman's lower eyelids will change with age can help surgeons plan a surgical "correction" that will prevent the changes seen in her mother.

The results of the study were presented last weekend to the annual American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) conference in Seattle, Washington in the US.

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