Sydney Cosmetic Surgeon Dr Longin Zurek introduced the concept of minimally invasive facial cosmetic surgery to Australia and performed the first S-lift facelift procedure in 1998. Since then he has developed his own modifications to facelifting techniques, which he has widely reported both in Australia and overseas. Dr Zurek named his facelift procedure SAFE (S-Access Facial Elevation)™. In recent years he has focused on techniques of volumetric facial rejuvenation by microfat grafting and currently is accumulating evidence of the dynamic and regenerative nature of grafted autologous (the patient’s own) fat. Here, Dr Zurek outlines the benefits of his pioneering procedures.

Rejuvenation by Microfat Transfer only
As the youthful fullness of the face deflates and shrinks with age, the face can appear hollow and underlying structures become emphasised. The bony prominence of the brow, eye area and cheekbone result in an aged appearance. The loss of the fat tissue leaves the skin unsupported and lax, adding to the droopiness around the jowls and neck.

Dr Zurek believes the most important method to restore a more youthful appearance to the face is to replace lost volume. ‘The best material for this is the patient’s own fat tissue, which not only replenishes lost volume but also improves the skin quality due to the presence of stem cells and growth factors,’ he says.

Key features
- Patient’s own body tissue is used – no risk of allergic reaction or rejection
- Permanent restoration/enhancement of volume
- Practically no risk of lumpiness with microfat grafting technique
- Improvement of skin quality (skin texture, subtleness and colour)
- Improvement of the quality of existing scars
- Economical, no additional cost of artificial fillers (which could be very substantial for large volume replacement)
- Relatively short downtime, with no bruising in the majority of cases

Microfat Grafting And Dr Zurek’s Modified S-Lift
‘The currently favoured concept of facelifting with a vertical vector of elevation began with the S-lift procedure,’ says Dr Zurek. He learned this technique from its originator Dr Parvis Ansari in 1998 and went on to perform the first S-lift in Australia the same year. He later developed the S-lift concept into an advanced technique, which he named S-Access Facial Elevation (SAFE).
Case Study Of Microfat Grafting And Safe Procedure

He widely reported his technique in journals and a textbook, and Dr Zurek continues to be a sought-after speaker around the world on this subject. To date, he has performed over 2,000 cases, with a high patient satisfaction rate and no significant complications.

Patients with significant skin laxity are suitable for this procedure, which is greatly complemented by fat transfer in the temples, brow lines, around the eyes, mid face and around the mouth. These areas are not addressed by facelift alone.

Key features
- Natural-looking result without the problems associated with traditional facelift for example ‘wind-tunnel’ look, pixie ears, stretched scar etc.
- S-shaped incision hidden in temporal hair and following the natural curvature of the ear
- Limited undermining and ‘unit lifting’ of underlying structure (SMAS and platysma) in a vertical direction, with skin attached to it
- Wound repaired without tension and imperceptible scar
- Performed under local anaesthetic

Microfat Grafting And Age Filaments

In early 2000 Dr Zurek developed custom-made barbed threads for facelifting without incisions, which he trade-marked Anti-gravity/Elevation (AGE) Filaments. To date, he has performed over 2,000 AGE Filament facelift procedures. Dr Zurek has reported his technique at a number of conferences and has written a chapter on the subject in a textbook on facial rejuvenation, published in 2008.

Patients with a minimal amount of skin looseness are suitable for this approach, which provides support for the lower part of the face. This procedure is complemented by restoring volume in the face by microfat grafting.

Key features
- AGE Filaments are hand crafted from biocompatible permanent suture material
- AGE Filaments anchor themselves underneath the skin and integrate with time, resulting in long-lasting support of facial tissue
- No skin incision is required, only a needle puncture
- Performed under local anaesthetic
- Low risk of complications
- Suitable for internally supporting (reinforcing) and repositioning mild to moderately sagging facial tissue
- Relatively short recovery time.