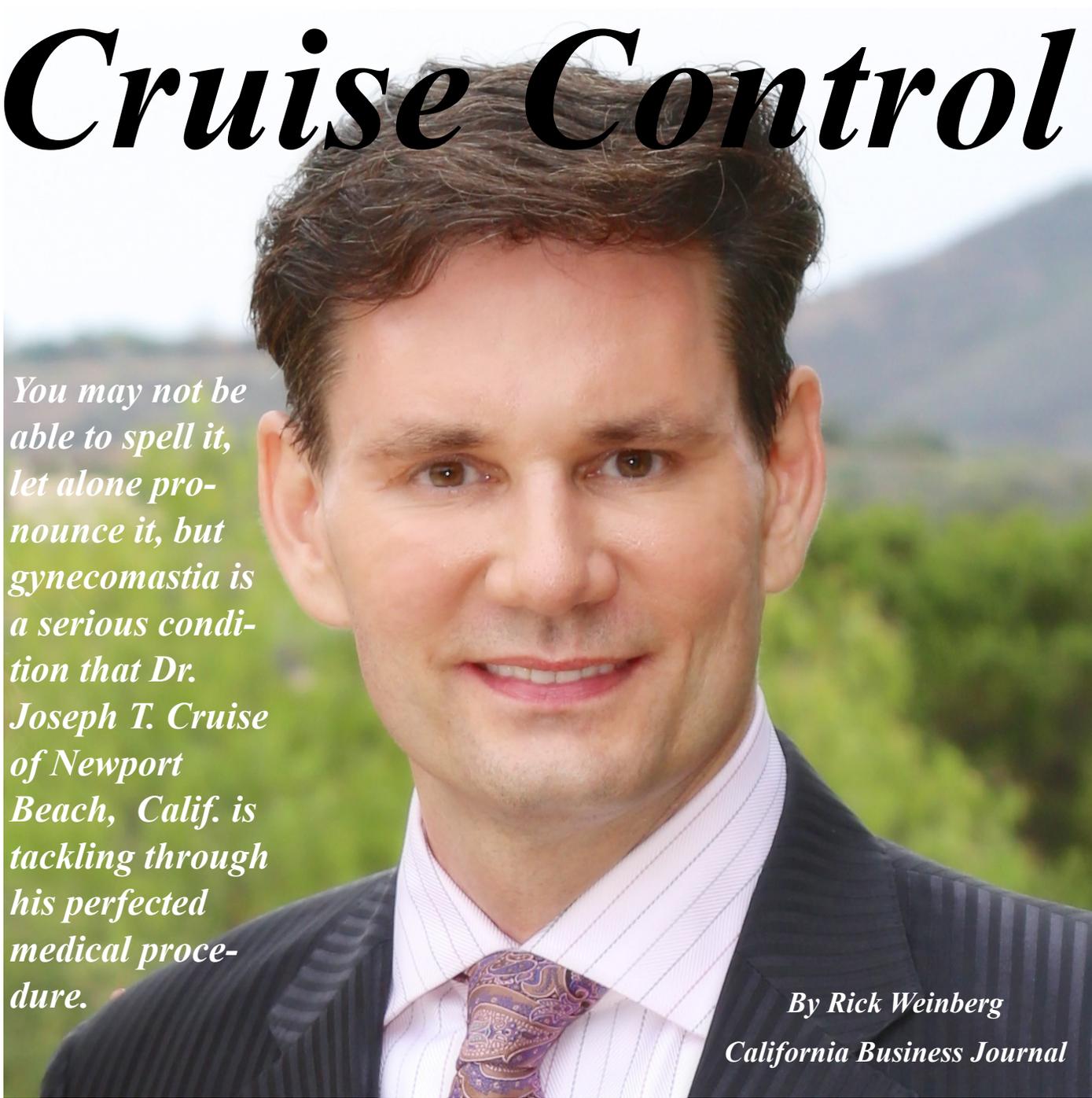


Cruise Control

A portrait of Dr. Joseph T. Cruise, a man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark pinstriped suit jacket, a white striped shirt, and a purple patterned tie. He is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage and a mountain range in the distance.

You may not be able to spell it, let alone pronounce it, but gynecomastia is a serious condition that Dr. Joseph T. Cruise of Newport Beach, Calif. is tackling through his perfected medical procedure.

*By Rick Weinberg
California Business Journal*

The embarrassment is overwhelming and psychologically damaging. Imagine being a guy who refuses to take your shirt off at the beach or at a gym – or opting to *not go to the beach or gym at all*, fearing it will expose a portion of your body that you don't want anyone to see. Imagine hiding your chest with an extra layer of clothing or refusing to even wear certain types of fabrics because you're nervous of being taunted.

Imagine having to go as far as to wear a *compression vest* under your shirt or *avoid dating women* all together because of this condition.

Well, millions of men go through this every day in every city in every part of the world. Sixty-five percent of men suffer from this condition known as gynecomastia or excess male breast tissue. This condition affects men of all ages, yet as scary as this sounds to people unaffected by this, it often starts at puberty, impacting boys as from a very early age and causing



Dr. Joseph T. Cruise (right) with patient Brandon Liberati (center) and Liberati's partner Craig Ramsey (left).

severe psychological damage and anxiety, setting them on a path for an unfulfilling life and confusing lifestyle.

The one surgeon in this country who knows more about this condition than perhaps anyone on the planet is Dr. Joseph T. Cruise of Newport Beach, Calif. He has been performing gynecomastia procedures for most of his 14-year career. He performs more gynecomastia surgeries weekly than most surgeons do in a year.

Equally impressive is that he has perfected his technique via the Cruise Classification System, which allows him to better target and define treatment for all types of gynecomastia with minimal downtime. He performs the majority of his procedures under local anesthesia – although there are some cases that require general anesthesia.

Having emerged as the leading and most influential doctor and surgeon in his highly-specialized, unique field, Dr. Cruise has perfected the incision portion of the procedure, reducing recovery time, pain and scarring to where it's a generally a non-issue.

“From the very beginning of my practice, I was

astounded at how underserved and misunderstood gynecomastia was,” he says. “As a surgeon, I feel an obligation to raise public awareness, not only for gynecomastia as a condition, but also for its treatment.”

Amazingly, these techniques are not typically taught in plastic-surgery training programs or in residency.

“I didn't do a single one of these procedures in my residency,” Dr. Cruise says. “It's just something that is not done or taught. Plastic surgeons are not trained in it traditionally.

“This condition has lived in a vacuum in society's eyes and in my own profession. When you look at the sheer number of articles, reports and studies on face lifts, breast implants and tummy tucks versus gynecomastia, it's minuscule. There is mounds of literature on everything – except gynecomastia.”

Yet Dr. Cruise is changing that. He started changing it 10 years ago when he was featured on the Discovery Channel and realized he had to be “the funnel” for circumstances to be more prevalent. From that point on, he made it his life's mission to make the public more aware of

it, especially the parents of teenage boys who could be afflicted with the condition, thereby damaging their psyche and questioning whether they're even male.

"Gynecomastia is more than a mere aesthetic concern," he says. "The emotional and psychological effects of this condition run deep and strip away self confidence like a cancer.

"Young teenagers are already having a difficult time fitting in. They become withdrawn and begin to feel alone and trapped in a body they begin to hate, eating away at their body image during a critical time.

"It's scary how unknown and mysterious this condition is."

The emotional pain worsens, continuing into adulthood and creating more psychological damage and the highest levels of self-consciousness.

"Patients suffer in silence, enduring profound feelings of embarrassment and becoming extremely insecure," Dr. Cruise says.

Take the case of Brandon Liberati of Hollywood, Calif. For more than 40 years, he suffered with gynecomastia.

"It tormented me," he says.

Finally, at the age of 48, he did something about it – only after he felt lumps in his chest.

Breast cancer was a big part of his family's history with his mother, grandmother, great grandmother and five other relatives.

"I wasn't going to let it happen to me," he says. He had surgery and his life has done a complete shift.

"I feel amazing and free," he says. "I am comfortable now wearing any clothing fabric, and I don't avoid shirtless situations like the beach, pool, or the locker room.

"This has changed my life and my self confidence. I actually feel like I am free to finally be myself for the first time."

He pauses for a moment and says, "The shame that you feel when you have gynecomastia is overwhelming at times and it haunted me up until the very last moment."

The stories of this relatively unknown condition are slowly beginning to surface.

Another one of Dr. Cruise's patients was so embarrassed by his decades-old condition of gynecomastia that he never even wanted *to leave his home*.

"I live close to the beach but I never even wanted to go there," he says. "I always looked forward to when it was cold so I could hide under a jacket. I never felt confident or comfortable with myself."

He wound up letting himself go. He thought he was stuck with having enlarged breasts for the rest of his life. "I felt so powerless," he says. "I was totally unaware that there was a solution."

How does he feel today after undergoing surgery?

"Dr. Cruise changed my life," he says. "He's changed the way I live and feel about myself. I now have tremendous confidence."

Even the most stoic of men are brought to tears when they experience successful results.

"Dr. Cruise is a master craftsman," says another patient. "His technique is simply unparalleled. Words cannot express how far my expectations were exceeded [after surgery]. I am literally a new man today."

He is more confident, bold, outgoing, friendly, optimistic and charismatic than ever before. His life is so much fulfilling and meaningful.

"I eat healthier and exercise like never before," he says. "I feel like I've been given a fresh start in life and a chance to live life to the fullest."

He now takes his shirt off whenever possible.

"I know, it's vain," he says with a laugh. "But I used to leave my shirt on for years trying to hide my body. Now it's time to make up for that."

What Dr. Cruise does so effectively is strategically and meticulously attack and remove the gland that causes gynecomastia.

By the sheer volume of the surgeries he has performed, he has learned and experienced so much that he has been able to perfect every element of the procedure, beginning with a linear incision path.

He also discovered how to carefully conceal the incision while tightening the muscles, creating definition and an authentic masculine chest.

Poorly-performed gynecomastia surgeries range from incomplete breast tissue removal and diverting to a puffy nipple, shiny areola characteristics and complex healing concerns, leaving patients feeling worse off than they were originally.

“I see so many examples of surgeons who take out the breast tissue, resulting in a sloppy chest,” Dr. Cruise says. “So you’ve gone from a gynecomastia chest to a sloppy old chest. You have to get the gland and tighten the skin and muscles.”

Correct nipple position also defines optimal results: done improperly after breast tissue removal, the nipple can fall into the chest fold, leaving an embarrassing lopsided and cratered appearance.

“You have to remove the breast tissue oozing over the pectoral and serratus muscles,” Dr. Cruise says.

More than 90% of male babies are born with gynecomastia, which evolves through the mother’s estrogen, yet the major majority of those babies grow out of it. The ones who do not suffer in silence, fearful of going to their parents to expose the condition.

Today, more teenage boys are afflicted with signs of gynecomastia because of too much fast food, dairy, genetics and steroids. It’s totally unpredictable who will be affected. What is predictable, though, is hiding the condition,

staying silent and having it negatively impact your life.

“It’s the whole feminizing aspect of it where men don’t want to talk about it,” says Dr. Cruise, who, through his years of experience, can diagnosis the symptoms within seconds – through eye contact, body positioning and clothing.

“We’re a heavier society today,” he says. “Fat carries enzymes that turn testosterone into estrogen, and then it begins to act in men like it does in women -- it builds up breast tissue. Even if you lose the fat, it doesn’t change the breast tissue.”

It’s a frightening scenario for heterosexual men of any age with potential feminine chest characteristics.

“I feel a sense of obligation to get this out in the open and help as many men affected by this condition,” Dr. Cruise says. “There is a psychological component to this that cannot and should not be overlooked by anyone. The world is more concerned about hiding it than learning about how to fix it.”

Not any more.

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