

Cosmetic Surgery Can Be a Beautiful Choice

Choosing to have cosmetic (aesthetic) plastic surgery is a very personal decision. Millions of people each year successfully undergo cosmetic surgery and enjoy the results of an enhanced appearance. Whether cosmetic surgery is right for you depends on many factors.

The information in this booklet will help you take the first steps toward making an informed decision about cosmetic plastic surgery. It will discuss the importance of selecting a qualified surgeon and give you an idea of what to expect from your initial consultation.

**Cosmetic surgery can be a beautiful choice ...
in the hands of a qualified surgeon.**

ASAPS: The Authoritative Source

The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) is the first and only plastic surgery organization devoted entirely to the advancement of cosmetic surgery. When ASAPS was founded in 1967, cosmetic surgery was in its infancy. There were 28 ASAPS founding members. Today, ASAPS has membership of more than 1900 plastic surgeons and is recognized throughout the world as the authoritative source for cosmetic surgery education.

ASAPS members are known for their skill and experience in performing cosmetic surgery of the face and body. They are a select group of plastic surgeons permitted to display the ASAPS logo, shown below, as a symbol of their achievements in the field of cosmetic plastic surgery.



**MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY
FOR AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY**

*The Mark of Distinction TM
In Cosmetic Plastic Surgery*

Understanding Credentials

Members of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery are board-certified plastic surgeons. Before a doctor can be board-certified in plastic surgery, he or she must complete a minimum of five years of surgical training following medical school. This training includes an accredited plastic surgery residency program where the surgeon masters both reconstructive and cosmetic operations. After this extensive formal education and establishment of a plastic surgery practice, the final step to board certification is successful completion of rigorous oral and written examinations administered by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (or, in Canada, by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada).

Not every doctor who uses the title "plastic surgeon" or "cosmetic surgeon" has been trained in plastic surgery and certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. In most states, any doctor with a medical license can advertise as a plastic or cosmetic surgeon, even if the doctor has no formal surgical training.

Don't be confused by other official-sounding boards and certifications. American Board of Plastic Surgery certification indicates a surgeon's qualifications to perform reconstructive and cosmetic plastic surgery of the face and the entire body.

Have Confidence in Your ASAPS Surgeon

Members of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery have the credentials that qualify them to perform the full range of cosmetic surgery. When you select an ASAPS surgeon, you can be confident that your surgeon:

- Is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery or, in Canada, by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- Has been in plastic surgery practice at least three years following board certification
- Qualifies for hospital privileges to perform cosmetic plastic surgery
- Has experience in a wide range of cosmetic procedures
- Has earned Continuing Medical Education credits in cosmetic surgery and fulfills ongoing educational requirements
- Operates in an accredited, state-licensed or Medicare-certified facility (or, in special circumstances, a facility in the process of accreditation)
- Has been recommended and approved for ASAPS membership by other qualified plastic surgeons
- Has agreed to uphold a strict Code of Ethics, to maintain high standards of patient care and respect patients' rights

ASAPS Surgeons Put Patients First

The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery and our members are dedicated to patient welfare. Patient safety is our first priority. According to ASAPS' Bylaws, members must operate in accredited, state-licensed or Medicare-certified facilities. The goal is to provide a safe environment for patients undergoing cosmetic surgery, whether in an office-based facility, free-standing surgicenter or hospital.

ASAPS believes in the public's right to know the facts about issues affecting their health and well-being. Through our web site at www.surgery.org, ASAPS provides extensive information on the full range of cosmetic procedures, including their benefits and risks. The web site also explains how to evaluate surgeon qualifications, and it offers official ASAPS position statements on new procedures and other timely subjects related to cosmetic surgery.

ASAPS creates patient newsletters and brochures for our members to use in their offices for patient education. ASAPS surgeons are committed to providing patients with everything necessary for full informed consent regarding cosmetic procedures.

Taking Your Next Step

Assuming that you have identified a specific feature, or features, of your face or body that you would like to improve, and you have a strong personal desire to make a change, then you may be an ideal candidate for cosmetic surgery. Now you're ready to take the next step toward enhancing your appearance with cosmetic surgery.

Here are some things you should know:

- Having realistic expectations about cosmetic surgery increases the likelihood that you will be happy with the results.
- No surgeon can offer risk-free surgery or guarantee a perfect result.
- A qualified surgeon will consider not only your physical suitability but also psychological factors such as emotional maturity and motivation for surgery.
- As a rule, cosmetic surgery is not covered by insurance. Fees generally are paid prior to your surgical date, or financing is arranged in advance.
- The most qualified surgeon may not be the most, or the least, expensive. Bargain-shopping for cosmetic surgery is never a good idea.
- You may be asked to avoid smoking, aspirin and certain other medications before and immediately after surgery.
- Following surgery, there may be restrictions on your activities for several days to weeks, depending on the type of procedure, or procedures.

Types of Cosmetic Procedures

Cosmetic (aesthetic) plastic surgery includes a variety of surgical and non-surgical procedures, including:

- Botulinum toxin (BTX, or Botox) injection
- Breast augmentation
- Breast lift
- Breast reduction, female*
- Breast reduction, male
- Brow lift
- Buttock lift
- Cheek augmentation
- Chemical peel
- Chin augmentation
- Collagen injection
- Dermabrasion
- Ear reshaping
- Facelift
- Fat injection
- Laser skin resurfacing
- Lip augmentation
- Liposuction (lipoplasty)
- Lower body lift
- Microdermabrasion
- Nose reshaping
- Thigh lift
- Tummy tuck
- Upper arm lift

Your ASAPS surgeon will help you to decide which procedure, or procedures, can best address the goals you have set for your appearance.

*In many instances, breast reduction in females may be considered "reconstructive" rather than cosmetic, and may be at least partially covered by your insurance policy.

Your Cosmetic Surgery Consultation

It's time to make your first appointment with an ASAPS-member plastic surgeon. When you call to arrange your consultation, your name will be entered on the schedule and a significant amount of time will be reserved for you to meet with the surgeon. That's why it is important for you to inform the surgeon's office as far in advance as possible if, for any reason, you are unable to keep your appointment.

Doctors set their own policies regarding consultation fees. Be sure to ask about the consultation fee when you make your appointment.

The consultation usually begins with a discussion of what bothers you about your appearance. Depending on what procedure, or procedures, you are considering, you may be asked to change into a robe or patient gown for an examination. Your photograph may be taken for the medical record. After careful evaluation, your ASAPS surgeon will explain his or her recommendations. Either the surgeon or another qualified member of the practice will discuss with you the surgical benefits, risks and recovery period. A discussion of cost will likely include the surgeon's fee, facility fee, anesthesia, recovery and other related items.

An ASAPS surgeon welcomes questions, and you should feel comfortable bringing up anything that is on your mind.

In the Hands of a Qualified Surgeon

Once you make the decision to schedule a date for your cosmetic surgery, your ASAPS surgeon will provide you with complete instructions on what to do before and after the surgical procedure. Your surgeon will make sure that you are fully prepared and know what to expect. Modern anesthesia and pain medications help to ensure that you will remain comfortable throughout your procedure and that any postoperative discomfort can be well managed. It may take a little time, but you will be on your way to a "better you" and maybe even a new outlook.

We hope that this booklet has helped you to make the best possible choices about cosmetic surgery. Rest assured that when you select an American Board of Plastic Surgery certified surgeon who is a member of the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS), you have placed your trust in the hands of a qualified surgeon.



**The American Society
for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery**

www.surgery.org

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