

# SAFE PLASTIC SURGERY

Your Choice



**The Symbol of Excellence in Plastic Surgery®**

A public education service of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons®  
and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.

# Your choices for cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery

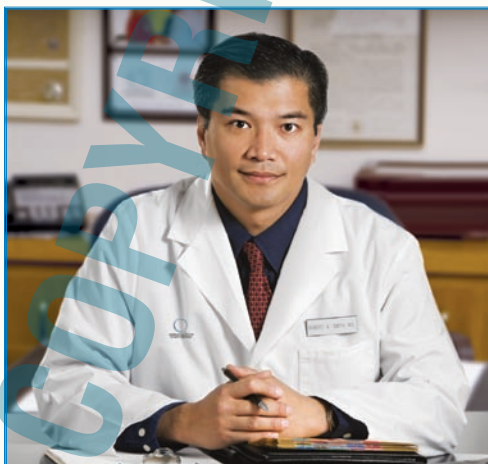
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**Cosmetic plastic surgery** includes surgical and nonsurgical procedures to *improve* your appearance. Healthy individuals with a positive outlook and realistic expectations are appropriate candidates for cosmetic procedures. Plastic surgery is a personal choice and you should do it for yourself, not to fulfill someone else's desires or to try to fit any sort of ideal image.

**Reconstructive plastic surgery** restores form and/or function to any part of the body affected by birth defects, injury or disease. The goal of reconstructive surgery is to *restore* appearance and function as close to normal as possible, but you must also approach this type of surgery with realistic expectations.

## Your plastic surgery partnership

You'll achieve the best results from plastic surgery if you and your surgeon communicate openly and work together to achieve realistic goals. An understanding of your goals, expectations and motivation is essential to a successful partnership between you and your surgeon, helping both of you to determine whether plastic surgery is the right choice for you.



# Beauty for life:

Choose a surgeon you can trust

Plastic surgery, whether for cosmetic or reconstructive purposes, involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting a surgeon you can trust. If you begin the process with an understanding that, like any surgery, plastic surgery carries some risk, you will appreciate the importance of choosing a qualified surgeon. A qualified plastic surgeon is not simply a physician with “good” credentials, but one with “recognized” credentials and specialized training specific to the procedure you are considering.

A doctor’s board certification is one of the best indicators of his or her training. Ask for certification from The American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS), the only one of the 24 boards approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) that certifies physicians in plastic surgery of the face and all areas of the body. To be ABPS board-certified, a physician must meet these rigorous standards:

- ▶ Graduate from an accredited medical school
- ▶ Complete at least **five** years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of **two** years of plastic surgery residency training
- ▶ Pass comprehensive oral and written exams

**American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) and American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) Members must:**

- ▶ Be certified by the ABPS or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®
- ▶ Complete continuing medical education including patient safety each year
- ▶ Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed or Medicare-certified surgical facilities

To verify that your plastic surgeon is board certified in the United States, you may contact the American Board of Plastic Surgery directly at (215) 587-9322 or visit the board’s website at [www.abplsurg.org](http://www.abplsurg.org). The American Board of Medical Specialties can also verify credentials, at (866) 275-2267, or at [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org). In Canada, you may contact The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons at (800) 668-3740, or [www.rcpsc.medical.org](http://www.rcpsc.medical.org).

## Professional affiliation is important too

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In addition to board certification, inquire about your plastic surgeon's professional affiliations. Membership in the American Society of Plastic Surgeons® (ASPS®), or the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) designates your surgeon among elite members of the plastic surgery community.

Both ASPS and ASAPS were among the first professional surgical societies to require members to use surgical facilities accredited by nationally recognized organizations or with equivalent licensing. In addition, both societies satisfy continuing education specifically in patient safety. Both societies also offer consumers the ability to learn more about their members through online consumer referral services and member directories.

Although board-certification by the ABPS and membership in ASPS or ASAPS cannot guarantee the results of your plastic surgery, choosing a qualified surgeon is an important first step in helping to assure your safety and satisfaction.

## More about professional affiliation

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Founded in 1931, ASPS is the largest organization of board-certified plastic surgeons in the world. The Society's core mission is to advance quality patient care and safety by encouraging high standards of training, ethics, physician practice and research in plastic surgery. In addition, ASPS has a strong public education service, publishing numerous informational brochures and maintaining a website. You can confirm ASPS membership and also research many plastic surgery procedures at [www.plasticsurgery.org](http://www.plasticsurgery.org).



ASAPS, founded in 1967, is devoted entirely to advancing the field of cosmetic plastic surgery through education and research. Its members are board-certified plastic surgeons who meet the same membership requirements as ASPS members, and as a part of their membership also fulfill additional requirements for experience and continuing medical education in cosmetic surgery. ASAPS membership, and information on cosmetic surgery procedures, can be found at [www.surgery.org](http://www.surgery.org).



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# Safety first:

## My surgery at an accredited facility

Your surgeon may opt to perform the procedure in a hospital setting or in an out patient or day surgery center.

An accredited facility is one that must meet strict national standards for equipment, operating room safety, personnel and surgeon credentials.

### The advantages of accredited facilities

Plastic surgery performed by board-certified plastic surgeons in accredited ambulatory facilities -- also known as outpatient surgery centers or same day surgery centers -- has an excellent safety record. Accredited ambulatory facilities have been documented, through research and the compilation of required reporting, to have:

- ▶ An extremely low rate of serious complications (less than half of 1 percent)
- ▶ An extremely low mortality rate (less than one in 57,000)
- ▶ The advantage of lower costs



If you need to recuperate overnight or for a few days in a specialty post-surgical treatment facility, make certain that you inquire about that facility's accreditation or licensing as well. In general, accreditation or licensing of such facilities requires that:

- ▶ You receive around-the-clock care by a minimum of two or more licensed staff members at all times
- ▶ At least one of the two staff members providing around-the clock care be certified in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)
- ▶ Necessary equipment and medication to handle any complications are on-site
- ▶ An emergency plan is defined and ready to be implemented should any complication arise that requires transferring a patient to a hospital

# Accredited facilities:

## A consumer guide

ASPS and ASAPS require that member surgeons use surgical facilities that meet established standards for quality and safety. All procedures, other than those requiring only local anesthetic and/or mild oral sedation, must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- ▶ Accredited by the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (AAAASF)
- ▶ Accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAH)
- ▶ Accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
- ▶ Certified to participate in the Medicare program under title XVIII
- ▶ A License by the state in which the facility operates. In general, accreditation or the equivalent requires a facility to:
  - ▶ Allow surgery to be performed only by an ABMS-certified or board eligible surgeon who has privileges to perform the same procedures at a local, accredited hospital
  - ▶ Provide anesthesia by a board-certified or board-eligible anesthesiologist or certified nurse anesthetist
  - ▶ Maintain a staff of certified surgical technicians, registered nurses or licensed practical nurses who are trained in ACLS and to recognize the signs of cardiac or respiratory distress
  - ▶ Adhere to all local, state and national regulations including sanitation, fire safety and building codes
  - ▶ Adhere to all federal laws and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations including blood-borne pathogen and hazardous waste standards
  - ▶ Use and practice advanced monitoring for patient safety during surgery and immediate recovery. You can verify the accreditation status of any surgical facility by contacting the accrediting organization, specifically:
    - ▶ AAAASF at (888) 545-5222 or [www.aaaasf.org](http://www.aaaasf.org)
    - ▶ AAAHC at (847) 853-6060 or [www.aaahc.org](http://www.aaahc.org)
    - ▶ JCAHO at (630) 792-5000 or [www.jcaho.org](http://www.jcaho.org).

# Your health and safety

Before undergoing surgery requiring sedation or general anesthesia, a full medical history including diagnostic tests is recommended.

Part of this medical history requires that you provide candid answers to questions about your general state of health, including:

- ▶ A full disclosure of health history including any illness, prior surgery of any kind and complications from prior surgery
- ▶ All types of allergies and any reaction to prior anesthesia
- ▶ Current medications, the use of vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- ▶ The use of oral contraceptives by women

**Before surgery, you must follow all of your plastic surgeon's instructions. This may include:**

- ▶ Cessation of smoking
- ▶ Stop taking certain types of medications that may increase your risk of abnormal bleeding

**On the day of surgery, you may be asked to:**

- ▶ Avoid eating or drinking anything within a defined time period prior to surgery

Follow all postoperative instructions carefully, including cleansing and at-home treatment regimens, and avoid sun exposure. Your cooperation will influence the outcome of your surgery.



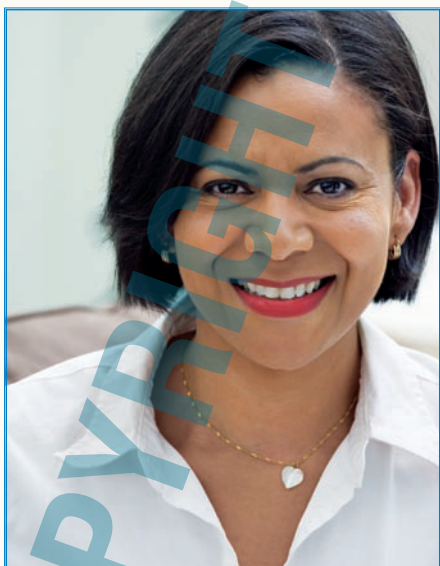


# Important facts about the safety and risks of plastic surgery

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The decision to have plastic surgery is extremely personal and you'll have to decide if the benefits will achieve your goals and if the risks and potential complications are acceptable. Your plastic surgeon and/or staff will explain in detail the risks associated with surgery. You will be asked to sign consent forms to ensure that you fully understand the procedure you will undergo and any risks and potential complications.

*Be sure to ask questions:* It's very important to ask your plastic surgeon questions about your procedure. It's natural to feel some anxiety, whether it's excitement for your anticipated new look or a bit of preoperative stress. Don't be shy about discussing these feelings with your plastic surgeon.



Your partnership with your plastic surgeon doesn't end once your surgery is completed. The relationship you establish with your surgeon is one that will continue. While the results of many plastic surgical procedures are often permanent, there can be changes as you age or due to other circumstances. That's why it is suggested that you maintain a regular schedule of follow-up examinations. By staying in touch with your board-certified plastic surgeon, you can enjoy the benefits of continued quality care.

# Questions to ask my plastic surgeon

## *Use this checklist as a guide during your consultation*

- Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- Are you a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons or the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery?
- Were you trained specifically in the field of plastic surgery?
- How many years of plastic surgery training have you had?
- Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- Is the office-based surgical facility accredited by a nationally- or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- How many procedures of this type have you performed?
- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- How are complications handled?
- What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the outcome of my surgery?
- Do you have before-and-after photos I can look at for each procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

*This brochure is published by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons® and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, including text, graphics, illustrations, and images, and is strictly intended for educational purposes. It is not intended to make any representations or warranties about the outcome of any procedure. It is not a substitute for a thorough, in-person consultation with a board-certified plastic surgeon.*

# Notes

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The American Society of Plastic Surgeons® (ASPS®) and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) are dedicated to advancing quality care in plastic surgery by encouraging high standards in training, ethics, physician practice, research, and continuing medical education. ASPS and ASAPS members are certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS) in the United States and its territories or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®.