



Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons

MEDIA RELEASE

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Death sparks renewed warnings about cosmetic tourism

The death of a British woman following cosmetic surgery in Thailand has prompted the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) to again warn people of the risks of 'cosmetic tourism'.

The British woman reportedly died last week during a corrective procedure performed by an allegedly uncertified surgeon; this was following the woman's surgery at the same Bangkok clinic weeks earlier.

ASPS President Dr Tony Kane said it is extremely concerning that some people perceive cosmetic surgery as less serious than other surgery. "Most people would never consider combining any other type of surgery with an overseas holiday," he said.

"The reality is that cosmetic surgery is invasive and carries the same risk as any other surgery and must be taken seriously."

Dr Kane said that while cosmetic tourism packages may appear cheaper than the same procedure in Australia, and are often sweetened by the addition of a beach holiday, many patients suffer complications requiring corrective surgery when they return to Australia. This means patients will end up paying more than if they had, upfront, chosen a qualified Specialist Plastic Surgeon in Australia.

"If, despite all the possible risks, the choice is to go overseas for a procedure, all patients should check that the staff, equipment and continuum of care is at least equal to what you would receive in Australia and that the medical practitioner has an internationally recognised and accredited surgical qualification, Dr Kane said.

"At the very least, you must insist on at least one face to face consultation with the practitioner before the surgery so you can ask all your questions about the procedure, the surgeon's qualifications and training and that of the anaesthetist and other medical staff involved. Also be fully satisfied that any devices and products used in the procedure meet Australian standards. You also need the details of all follow up care and management of complications", he said.

Dr Kane said there have been cases of patients going overseas and having multiple procedures done in a short space of time and then almost immediately returning to Australia on a long flight which is extremely risky.

The Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons has a comprehensive cosmetic tourism checklist, "*Buyer Beware: Cosmetic Tourism*" on its website which provides consumer-friendly advice and outlines questions to consider ahead of a cosmetic procedure overseas.

Visit: www.plasticsurgery.org.au/protecting-patient-safety/current-issues/buyer-beware-cosmetic-tourism

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Founded in 1970, the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons Inc (ASPS) is the peak body for Specialist Plastic Surgeons (both reconstructive and cosmetic). Its mission is to provide the highest quality plastic surgery care to all Australians.