



MEDIA RELEASE – September 2020

Considering cosmetic surgery? – Why you should choose a Specialist Plastic Surgeon

Making a decision to undertake cosmetic surgery should never be undertaken lightly.

“Unlike a new hairstyle, cosmetic surgery is a permanent change to your appearance, and is not risk free. That’s why taking time to research your choice of surgeon may be the best investment you make,” advises Dr Dan Kennedy, President of the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS).

“It may also help consumers avoid the adverse outcomes, that, tragically, too many Australians have experienced from botched surgeries, cardiac episodes and even death.”

In Australia anyone with a basic medical degree can perform cosmetic surgery without undergoing specialist surgical training and assessment accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC), the body that has oversight over all medical practitioners in Australia.

“This can confuse and therefore disadvantage patients who might assume that all doctors who perform cosmetic surgery, or advertise themselves as ‘cosmetic surgeons,’ have the same level of training and are therefore equally qualified to perform the same job. This is the not the case.”

In fact, the title ‘cosmetic surgeon’ has never been approved by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency” (APHRA), and the NSW Parliamentary Report into Cosmetic Surgery recommended banning use of the title ‘Cosmetic Surgeon’ to eliminate consumer confusion.

So what’s the difference?

“Specialist Plastic Surgeons undergo years of training and ongoing assessment to qualify for their specialist title. They are highly trained, highly qualified specialist surgeons who can safely undertake complex procedures to repair, restore or enhance all parts of a patient’s body,” says Dr Kennedy.

In addition to a six year medical degree, a Specialist Plastic Surgeon, has undertaken and successfully completed 5 years post-graduate specialty training in Plastic, Cosmetic and Reconstructive Surgery and is qualified through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

We advise all consumers to look for the ‘FRACS’ title after a surgeon’s name to ensure they’ve had the highest level of specialist surgical training recognized by Australian medical regulators.

“This is effectively a ‘stamp of excellence’ that minimizes your risks and maximizes you opportunity for a positive outcome,” says Dr Kennedy.

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.



A Specialist Plastic Surgeon only performs surgeries in accredited hospitals and facilities, governed by the highest possible safety standards and regularly audited by Health Departments.

A Specialist Plastic Surgeon abides by the RACS and the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons' Codes of Ethics which means they:

- uphold the highest professional, safety and ethical standards and always put a patient's interests first;
- advise patients of all the risks associated with their procedure and give them time to consider their surgery or get a second opinion;
- do not falsely advertise and are transparent about fees and,
- do not mislead consumers or pressure them into surgeries that may not be in their best interests.

Consumers can check whether their surgeon's qualifications via the AHPRA or ASPS websites.

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