

QUICK FACT SHEET

What to look for

[PLASTIC SURGEON]

Board-certified plastic surgeons have completed medical school, a minimum of five years of surgical training, a residency program in plastic surgery and exams.

[FACIAL PLASTIC SURGEON]

Board-certified facial plastic surgeons complete medical school and a four-to-six year residency in otolaryngology (head and neck surgery), which includes up to two years of general surgery training and exams.

[DERMATOLOGIST]

Besides medical school, board-certified dermatologists must complete a one-year medical internship, a three-year residency program and exams.

HERE'S THE SCENARIO: YOU HEAR OF A DOCTOR WHO CLAIMS TO BE BOARD-CERTIFIED AND IS SUPPOSED TO BE "THE BEST," PROMISING TO MAKE YOU LOOK BETTER THAN EVER. YOU BOOK AN APPOINTMENT, BUT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW IS THAT THIS DOCTOR ISN'T A BOARD-CERTIFIED PLASTIC SURGEON—HE LACKS THE PROPER TRAINING, EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE TO PERFORM ANY COSMETIC PROCEDURE.

DANGEROUS BEAUTY

HOW TO AVOID PLASTIC SURGERY NIGHTMARES



board-certified: IS IT ENOUGH?

Maybe you think having a board-certified doctor is no big deal, but it is. Just like how you wouldn't opt for your dentist to perform heart surgery on you, the same rule of thumb holds true for any aesthetic procedure. Don't fall victim to the potential pitfalls that come along with having a nonboard-certified doctor perform a cosmetic procedure. Make sure you know what to look for and what to avoid when you're on the search for a beauty expert.

FIVE ESSENTIALS YOU NEED TO KNOW

- 01 Any board-certified doctor is legally certified to practice medicine. **But not all are trained or have the knowledge and education to practice** cosmetic procedures.
- 02 **Plastic surgeons receive certification from the American Board of Plastic Surgery and the American Board of Otolaryngology**, both of which are recognized by the ABMS.
- 03 Becoming a board-certified doctor is **not a quick and easy process**.
- 04 **Being a board-certified doctor means that you have undergone the required amount of training** to ensure that you have experience and knowledge to perform a procedure limited to that specialty with consistently good results.
- 05 There are **several years of medical school, residency and training that need to be completed**, followed by lengthy and difficult exams that must be passed.



FIND A BEAUTY DOCTOR NOW!

The essential guide to help you make the right choices. Turn to page 169.

“The number of general medical doctors who have started doing cosmetic procedures and treatments is growing. A lot of them are performing procedures in their offices, without supervision by their respective state medical boards. It’s happening in both big cities and small towns.”

— DR. EDWARDS

95%

of Americans say it’s important to them that their doctors participate in a program to **maintain board-certification.**

SOURCE: ABMS

Be wary of procedures, like fillers, injectables and lasers, performed in medi-spas. There’s a chance that the person who is performing the treatment does not hold a medical degree or did not go to medical school.

800,000

the number of physicians certified by the 24 member boards of the ABMS.

SOURCE: ABMS

MORE >

why it's important that your doctor is

+ BOARD-CERTIFIED IN PLASTIC SURGERY

There has been a recent influx of noncertified doctors performing aesthetic procedures. "With changes in insurance reimbursement, the way doctors make money has shifted. More non-core doctors started performing cosmetic procedures and essentially, nothing is considered off limits," says Las Vegas plastic surgeon Michael Edwards, MD.

"There are many unqualified doctors (even ones who have a medical license) who say they are board-certified and pass themselves off as plastic surgeons," says Madison, WI, facial plastic surgeon Richard Parfitt, MD.

So what's a patient to do? Their homework first and foremost. Verify that your doctor is board-certified, in good standing and qualified to perform the procedures that he or she claims they can do. It's better to see a board-certified plastic surgeon because they are well-versed in the treatment and should something go wrong, they have a better understanding of how to treat it.

"A quick rundown in a weekend course is not the same as training in an accredited surgical and plastic surgery residency, and practicing the art of plastic surgery to become a board-certified plastic surgeon." - DR. EDWARDS



if it is so risky,
WHY IS IT ALLOWED?

State governments, not the federal government, put their own laws into effect, allowing nonboard-certified doctors to perform cosmetic procedures. Many practitioners get away with performing surgery and injectables when they shouldn't be simply because they have a medical license and attended a special course. But, they can't operate in accredited facilities or hospitals, which is why many botched jobs happen in back offices, hotels or someone's garage. "If a problem or complication arises, these people don't know how to deal with the problem, so they can't do much to help the patient," says Eugene, OR, plastic surgeon Mark Jewell, MD.



THE ECONOMIC FACTOR

"The recession caused many practitioners to stray from what they are trained in and offer procedures they don't have the proper training for," adds Dr. Edwards. "They get a quick rundown in a weekend course, either by video, looking over someone's shoulder or being trained by the company. That's not the same as accredited training and plastic surgery residency for six to eight years, and then practicing the art of plastic surgery before becoming a board-certified plastic surgeon."

CERTIFIED

the difference between A SURGEON AND A REGULAR DOCTOR

When you think of a general doctor (family, primary or general practitioner) you think of someone you visit for a checkup or to treat you for the common cold. All doctors in the U.S. must complete medical school, residency and training. Surgeons continue their education and choose a specific field of medicine to practice; more specifically, a plastic surgeon is a physician who has completed a specialized residency and an additional plastic surgery training residency. All surgeons are doctors but not all doctors are surgeons.

*We asked readers:
Would you go to a
nonboard-certified
plastic surgeon?*

80%

*No, it sounds
too dangerous.*

SOURCE: newbeauty.com



5%

I have.

15%

I would consider it.

45%

of Americans say that they would look for a **new doctor** if they learned theirs was **not participating** in a program to maintain their board-certification.

SOURCE: ABMS

78%

of Americans **incorrectly believe** that a doctor must be board-certified in his or her specialty area to practice medicine.

SOURCE: ABMS

why would anyone CHOOSE RISKY SURGERY?

01

PRICE.

"The price of procedures is a common reason why someone chooses an unqualified doctor," says Dr. Edwards. Surgery with a qualified surgeon may be more costly, but you are dealing with your body and your life, and comparison-shopping should not be a priority.

02

EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS.

Encino, CA, plastic surgeon George Sanders, MD, says a factor for seeing nonboard-certified doctors is the comfort level patients have with their doctors. "If you're at the gynecologist and you trust them and they offer cosmetic procedures, patients may go for it because the comfort level has already been established."

DID YOU KNOW?

Dr. Edwards says many, but not all, doctors who perform cosmetic surgery out of the area they've been formally trained in use local anesthesia with or without sedation, rather than general anesthesia administered by a board-certified anesthesiologist. "The problem is lack of proper monitoring with any sedation ensuring the safety of the patient."

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if you're faced with any of these warning signs, **IT'S TIME TO WALK**

RED FLAGS

YOUR DOCTOR CALLS HIMSELF A COSMETIC SURGEON. No board-certified plastic or facial plastic surgeon refers to himself as a "cosmetic surgeon." A cosmetic surgeon is not the same as a plastic surgeon and lacks the proper training and certification.

YOUR DOCTOR DOESN'T HAVE HOSPITAL PRIVILEGES OR THE FACILITY WHERE THE PROCEDURE IS GOING TO BE PERFORMED IS NOT ACCREDITED. This means that your doctor can't perform surgery in a hospital, often because he is unqualified.

OVERPROMISING RESULTS. There are no guarantees when it comes to cosmetic procedures. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

YOUR DOCTOR WON'T SHOW YOU EXAMPLES OF HIS WORK. Before-and-after photos are the best ways to gauge a plastic surgeon's aesthetic. If he or she won't show you photos of surgeries performed in the past, or if the results all look the same, find a new doctor.

YOU ARE TOLD YOU'LL MEET THE DOCTOR AT THE TIME OF SURGERY.

You need to meet with the doctor who will be performing your surgery before you go into the operating room. If you only meet with a patient coordinator or a nurse, don't opt for the procedure.

CERTIFIED

FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO MAKE SURE YOUR DOCTOR IS PROPERLY CERTIFIED

- Make sure the person you are going to see is a board-certified doctor** with the ABMS.
- Check your state's medical board.** This will provide information on your doctor's license and any complaints against him.
- Confirm that your doctor has hospital privileges.** All plastic surgeons should have hospital privileges, even if your procedure is not being performed in a hospital.
- Review the doctor's training, credentials and how much experience he has.** Check to see if they are affiliated with the main plastic surgery societies like ASPS or ASAPS.

A COSMETIC SURGEON VS. A PLASTIC SURGEON

According to La Jolla, CA, plastic surgeon Robert Singer, MD, a cosmetic surgeon and plastic surgeon may sound the same, but the term cosmetic surgeon is not recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties. Dr. Sanders adds, "Doctors can call themselves board-certified, but they are only certified in what they hold training in." To determine if a doctor is board-certified in the specialty for which they were trained, visit certificationmatters.org.

MORE >



THE RISKS AND DANGERS THAT CAN OCCUR

01

POOR RESULTS

No one elects for a procedure hoping for bad results. Poor results can be irreparable and that alone can be like a death sentence. Revision surgery is costly and multiple procedures may be needed to correct the problem.

fillers gone wrong

Argentine doctor Daniel Serrano used a Botox alternative (low-grade auto silicone) on Priscilla Presley, leaving her with a waxy look. Serrano often performed "Botox parties," using non-FDA-approved fillers that would leave women with lumps and bumps as well as difficulty drinking and speaking.

SOURCE: TMZ

02

LOSS OF FEELING OR CONSTANT PAIN

It's not uncommon to experience temporary numbness after surgery, but total loss of feeling or consistent pain without improvement is cause for concern.

nip/tuck nightmare

BOTCHED BREAST AUGMENTATION LEAVES WOMAN WITH SHOOTING PAINS

Michele Trobaugh of Atlanta believed Dr. Jan Adams, a nonboard-certified plastic surgeon, could fix her uneven breasts. Trobaugh had a breast augmentation, tummy tuck and liposuction performed at the same time. Immediately after surgery she suffered from shortness of breath, three infections and constant bleeding. Trobaugh says she would have never chosen Dr. Adams had she known the malpractice judgments against him (he's the same doctor who performed surgery on Kayne West's mother Donda West the day before she died). A year-and-a-half after surgery, Trobaugh says she has still has shooting pain in her breasts.

SOURCE: CNN

03

BAD SCARS

Board-certified plastic or facial plastic surgeons understand both the surgery that will be performed and the anatomy of the area of the body where the surgery will be done. If your doctor is unfamiliar with skin in that area and the proper way to make an incision, bad scars can form.

04

DEFORMITIES

Major deformities that can arise include disfiguring scars from laser liposuction, protruding breast implants, lumps, bumps and open wounds. "Facial nerve damage and skin sloughing (when the skin dies because of poor blood supply) are common when facial surgeries are performed without properly assessing the patient," says Dr. Sanders.

05

DEATH

Death from plastic surgery can arise due to reactions to anesthesia or fatal amounts of it, pulmonary embolisms, preexisting health conditions that were ignored and drug overdoses from pain medication.

NEGLIGENT DOCTOR CHARGED WITH MANSLAUGHTER AFTER PERFORMING RISKY LIPOSUCTION PROCEDURE

New York internist Oleg A. Davie, who marketed himself as a plastic surgeon, performed liposuction on Isel Pineda, a heart transplant patient (she was on anti-rejection prescription medication). After surgery, Pineda collapsed and was rushed to a hospital where she suffered a heart attack and died. Davie claimed that Pineda never told him about her transplant, but it was discovered that he allegedly forged her consent form. He was charged with manslaughter and criminal negligent homicide.

SOURCE: New York Post