

# Health Bulletin

## Patient Safety And Plastic Surgery

(NAPSA)—With the public's growing acceptance of plastic surgery, potential patients need to consider some very important factors before having a procedure.

"Certainly patients need to do their homework regarding a physician's credentials," said Edward Luce, MD, president of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS). "Board-certified plastic surgeons are highly trained to produce a successful outcome, while ensuring maximum patient safety before, during and after surgery."

Patients should determine if their plastic surgeon is an ASPS member, which means they are certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, the only board recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties certifying surgeons in plastic surgery of the face and all areas of the body.

By choosing an ASPS member, patients know the physician graduated from an accredited medical school and completed at least five years of additional residency, usually three years of general surgery and two years of plastic surgery.

Everyone who chooses to have plastic surgery has the right to a safe procedure. To ensure patient safety, the ASPS established a committee to study issues related to office-based surgical facilities. More than 60 percent of plastic surgery procedures in 2000 were performed in an office-based facility.

As a further safeguard for patients, the ASPS requires all members who perform surgery under anesthesia to do so in an accredited, licensed or Medicare-approved facility by July 1, 2002.

"Patient safety has always been of paramount importance to our members," said Ronald Iversen, MD, chair of the ASPS Committee on Patient Safety in Office-based Surgery Facilities. "Our committee helps the ASPS to continue its leadership position as the 'gold standard' for safety in



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
PLASTIC SURGEONS

**When choosing a plastic surgeon, look for the symbol of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the gold standard for plastic surgery safety.**

plastic surgery."

As more and more Americans choose plastic surgery to maintain or enhance their appearance, they need to be informed and plan a procedure with a board-certified plastic surgeon.

For more information on cosmetic and reconstructive surgery, or to find a plastic surgeon certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery, call 1-888-4-PLASTIC (888-475-2784) or visit [www.plasticsurgery.org](http://www.plasticsurgery.org).

### Questions To Ask When Choosing A Plastic Surgeon

- Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- Do you have hospital privileges to perform this surgery?
- Where and how will you perform my surgery?
- Is the surgical facility accredited or in the process of being accredited by a national or state-recognized accrediting organization?
- What are the risks involved with my procedure?
- How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- Will I need to take time off work? If so, how long?
- How much will my procedure cost?
- Are financing options available?

