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Are The Surgeons Professional Enough?

Nowadays, the picture of beauty is usually a gorgeous super model with slim body posted in commercials all around the world. Children are brought up playing with Barbie dolls, which is well known of having a perfect body and gorgeous face. Every girl wants to look like her.

In recent years, such perception has brain washed not only women, but also the men. They believe that in order for a person to look beautiful, they must look like the images seen on television, in movies and on the cover of magazines. These images show incongruously thin women and muscular men with the infamous six-pack abs. The Hollywood stars that are so famous for their looks and bodies also encourage the belief that thin is pretty and attractive. Since we see those perfect figures everywhere and every day, people started to believe these are the standard of beauty.

As a result, a person is easily convinced to believe that to be beautiful and happy, one must look like these images. But busy lifestyles make exercising daily in order to have the fit and trim bodies more difficult. To most people, the easiest way to achieve this is by having cosmetic surgery performed. However, this can be a dangerous choice. With the change of time, we do have a great improvement in medical procedures. However, no matter how good the technological advancements are, there is always the risk of not only the surgery resulting in unwanted outcomes but in some cases death.

Many fatalities have been reported as a result of surgical procedures. According to Dr. Jack Bruner, head of a liposuction task force organized by the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons, “liposuction has caused 60 to 100 fatalities over five years”(Foreman). Also, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons acknowledged in a 1998 press release showed a death rate of about 20 out of 100,000 patients who underwent liposuction between 1994 and 1998 (“Deaths From Liposuction”).

According to the *Seattle Times,* in 1997, a 47-year-old California woman died after a ten and a half hour liposuction surgery. An administrative law judge ruled that her plastic surgeon gave her too much tumescent fluid. Not only this, “On June 22, 1996, a 43-year-old California woman went in for "lunchtime lipo" in Los Angeles and was "dead soon after dinner," as one magazine put it”(Foreman). “Her operation was done in an office by an obstetrician-gynecologist who had not even completed a two-weekend course”, says the Medical Board of California. Another calamity occurred to a 51-year-old Florida man who died as a result of valvular heart disease due to diet drugs and complications of plastic surgery.

Pursuing beauty is not a wrong thing. Yet, people should take the risks into account seriously and carefully. Most advertisements are promoting the plastic surgery service broadly and stating how low the risk is due to the advanced medical equipment. Some of them even encourage people by having pretty low price. When people ask about why the price can be that low, “plastic surgery is so common nowadays and it is just a simple procedure”, is one of the common answers from the companies.

In fact, although the technological advancements may seem to have improved the results of cosmetic surgery today, more complications can also arise from improper training of the surgeon. “Plastic surgery is one of the most dynamic and rapidly changing specialties in medicine. New modalities of treatment, new technologies, and new procedures are constantly arising that require specialized and hands-on expose.” said Dr. Gorney, a former ASPS president.

In current years, many "discount" price plastic surgeons that claim to offer professional service for a low price, but most of them are not even properly trained to perform such drastic cosmetic surgeries. “A doctor can attend a seminar at a hotel and in a few hours, learn how to perform liposuction”, says Rod Rohrich, a plastic surgeon and co-editor of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, “Anybody can do liposuction, even dentists have been doing it” (Qureshi).

Due to the rise of unprofessional and untrained surgeons performing the surgery, it greatly increases the chance of death and improper results. In particular to low-income people who pursuing those cover model perfect look will easily become victims as they want affordable cost for the service. They even cheat those victims by providing fake credential, such as certification or degrees. When customers see these, they feel confident with the doctors and pay for the surgery without doing any background research on the doctors. In recent years, many deaths of cosmetic surgeries is because people trusting those unethical and dishonorable doctor to perform complicated surgeries. “It’s especially risky if it’s done in a doctor’s office, if the doctor is not properly trained and certified” (Foreman).

In 2004 in Miami, Florida, a plastic surgery “doctor” named Reinaldo Silvestre, who was arrested because of performing surgery and practicing medicine without a license. A former Mr. Mexico whose name is Alexander Baez was a patient of Silvestre, he claimed that instead of the more muscular chest he wanted, he was given breast implants. “When I finally woke up from this procedure, I had two full female breasts and had to walk around like that for several months until the female breasts could be removed”, he said (Not Guilty plea).

Though there are already a massive number of deaths because of cosmetic surgical procedures, so many people are still falling in love with it or even being addictive to them in order to have attractive appearance. To achieve their chase of beauty, they even dare to bet their life besides money. More importantly, society seems accept and like such trend a lot. We can easily see advertisements for plastic surgery in different magazines, and even some on television. For instance, there is a television series titled “A Personal Story” by Learning channel, showing us some beauty pursuer undergoing cosmetic surgery. The series talked about how they succeed in a cosmetic surgery and become nice looking afterward. But it is interesting that the series contained nothing about failures. They did not even talk about the risk of those surgeries. All people could see is how perfect they could be by performing cosmetic surgeries. Watching this series is like an encouragement for people to get cosmetic surgery and ignoring those serious consequences. This irresponsible TV program is one great example of pushing people to danger.

Many people believe that having the beautiful bodies of the super models or the muscles of Mr. America help them feel happy because they become more confident and their self-esteem is strengthened after undergoing cosmetic surgery. In fact, there is a very high rate of people having more than one plastic surgery. Many of them undergo more surgeries after the first one. It shows that cosmetic surgery is like opium, and people will become addictive to it definitely. Despite the first surgery is successfully done, the satisfaction will not last long, and desire of other types of cosmetic surgeries will happen afterward. In other words, people will never be fully satisfied and always want more. Once a part is fixed, we will find another part is imperfect and need correction too. Indeed, nothing is perfect, and performing plastic surgery is actually an endless road.

So, how can we avoid this problem? First is to know what the goal of having the cosmetic surgery is. Why do we want to look better in spite of the risks? For a better relationship with somebody, or for better impression and therefore getting a better job? For instance, being good-looking may really help for getting a job because of the positive impression. Yet, we still need to be knowledgeable and skilled enough to maintain the job in long term. Undeniably, it is more important to upgrade ourselves through knowledge than our appearance.

To conclude, pursuing beauty is definitely not a wrong thing, having plastic surgery neither. However, people considering plastic surgery should do comprehensive research, both about the surgery and the surgeons, before undergoing the surgery. As there are so many news showing us the serious consequences of having surgeries performed by the untrained doctors, we do have to make sure we are finding the right surgeons by getting information about their experience and qualifications, and looking into the reviews from other patients is another good way too. Moreover, patients should be informed of all the risks they might have. Advanced technology and improved equipment do help a lot with the surgical procedures. Nevertheless, risks could arise from many other causes, untrained or inexperienced surgeons, for example. We should not pay such high costs in order to match the “standard” of society, which the costs include an invaluable thing, our lives.

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