



Australian Government

Department of Health
and Aged Care

— KNOW THE RISKS — — — — —

What you need to know before deciding on cosmetic surgery

Cosmetic surgery changes a person's physical appearance. It refers to procedures that involve cutting beneath the skin such as breast implants, tummy tuck (abdominoplasty), nose surgery (rhinoplasty), and surgical face lifts.

Like any form of surgery, cosmetic surgery has risks, so it's important to research using reliable sources of information to make an informed decision about your procedure. Before deciding on cosmetic surgery, make sure you understand as much as you can about:

- your procedure
- your medical practitioner
- the facility or clinic where your procedure will take place
- your recovery and aftercare, and
- who to call if you have concerns with your procedure.

Choose a qualified practitioner

It is important to choose a qualified medical practitioner who is skilled and experienced in performing your surgery. Your practitioner must be registered with the Medical Board of Australia.

You can check if someone is registered on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) register of practitioners. You can also see their qualifications and if there are conditions or limitations on procedures they can perform. You should also talk to your GP for advice or a referral.

Choose a licensed facility

Make sure you check that your surgery will take place in a licensed facility. All states and territories restrict where cosmetic surgeries can take place. This is for patient health and safety. In some jurisdictions, certain surgeries must be done in licensed facilities. Check the requirements in the state or territory where you are planning to have your cosmetic surgery. If something doesn't feel right about the location of your procedure, ask further questions, or cancel your appointment.

Understand the risks

Every cosmetic surgery involves risks. It is important to talk to your medical practitioner to understand:

- what will happen during the surgery
- the risks and possible complications – including any that may be unique to your health history
- what results you can expect and how long the results will last.

Understand your recovery plan

Recovery and aftercare can be as important for your health and wellbeing as the quality of the surgery itself. If there are complications with your recovery, you should know who to contact and who will support you.

Ask your practitioner to give you a plan for your recovery and aftercare, particularly if your surgery requires general anaesthesia. If they cannot do this, you should go somewhere else for your surgery.

**For more information on preparing for cosmetic surgery
visit health.gov.au/cosmeticsurgery**

If you have concerns about the outcome of your surgery or quality of care, call the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) Cosmetic Surgery Hotline on 1300 361 041.