

BAAPS consumer safety guidelines

1. Make your own decisions: The real expert on your appearance and any concerns you may have is YOU. The only assistance you should need is to decide what, if any, surgery you might need, and you should ensure you get unbiased information regarding what might be technically possible and any associated risks and benefits. Do not let anyone talk you into doing anything for which you had little concern before the consultation.

2. Be Informed: Anyone considering any cosmetic procedure should ensure they are fully informed and accept the limitations and risks of any procedure. Remember, no surgeon or procedure is 100% risk free.

3. Be Comfortable: Make sure you feel comfortable with the organisation, surgeon and clinic you have chosen.

4. Know your surgeon: Many practitioners purport to be experts, but many are not even surgeons. Practitioners may boast impressive sounding qualifications, but these can have little meaning. Organisations associated with and preferably based in the Royal College of Surgeons will demonstrate acceptable standards of practice, i.e., those which you can reasonably expect of surgeons and doctors in general. Hospitals which have strong associations with NHS consultants and practice will also adhere to these standards and so offer some level of reassurance. The BAAPS can help you find a properly credentialed surgeon in your area.

5. Get the timing right: Unless the circumstances are exceptional, avoid surgery if you have recently experienced major life events such as moving house, changing job, losing a loved one, the break-up of a relationship or the arrival of children.

6. Beware of 'free' consultations and avoid booking fees or non-refundable deposits (a typical feature of many commercial clinics). Nothing is free and if the surgery is right for you then there will be no need for you to be locked into going ahead by any financial cancellation penalties.

7. Think about location: Do not travel a long distance or overseas for any surgery unless you are comfortable with the arrangements to follow up and the management of any problems or complications which might arise.

8. Talk to Your GP: Your GP has no interest other than your welfare, so many doctors are very happy to advise patients and not be judgemental about something which many people feel very sensitive and vulnerable about.

9. You Can Always Change Your Mind: Hopefully everything will be totally to your satisfaction, but remember you have the option to cancel right up until the time you go to sleep for surgery. The fundamental reason for the surgery is to make you feel better about yourself, and if this is compromised, surgery should not proceed. No reputable surgeon would normally impose any penalty for cancellations.

10. Take Your Time: Remember that undergoing surgery is a serious commitment.

General advice before you consider cosmetic surgery tourism

Although it is possible for patients have satisfactory outcomes from cosmetic surgery abroad, a significant number find that they need treatment when they come back to the UK , either urgently because of surgical complications and being prematurely discharged from care, or later when they discover that they are unhappy with the overall result. The decision to go abroad for cosmetic surgery, away from one's support network, cannot be taken lightly.

Make sure it is your decision. Only agree to a package that is all

inclusive, and which clearly defines that your right to cancel at any point is protected without financial penalty and that your follow-up and the cost of treating complications are covered.

Beware of agencies that glamorise combining cosmetic surgery with a holiday, your welfare is at risk. This idea is misleading and irresponsible, patients after major surgery require rest and care and cannot enjoy sunbathing, swimming or sightseeing.

Check the credentials of your surgeon and the hospital, while it is fairly easy to do this in the UK , it may not be as easy to do so abroad.

Beware of any package that doesn't allow you to meet the surgeon who operates on you for a consultation before you agree to surgery. Ensure that there is no significant language barrier during this meeting.

Check that the surgeon and the hospital are indemnified for medical mishaps and negligence.

Early complications can happen 7-10 days after surgery, so make sure you have a thorough check up during this period and that they do not fly you home too early.

Do not agree to blood transfusion or the use of other blood products unless you are certain that the safety standards meet those of the UK .

If you prefer cosmetic surgery abroad because of cheap offers, consider the reasons why cosmetic surgery in the UK may be moderately more expensive:

- **a:** Stringent and costly regulations for the highest possible standard of care and safety from the Health Care Commission that the private hospitals in the UK have to comply with.
- **b:** UK plastic surgeons have to pay high indemnity fees, often in excess of £40,000.00 a year as a safeguard for patients, before they are allowed to carry out cosmetic surgery. This is not the case in the rest of Europe , and in most of the developing

countries indemnity against medical mishaps and negligence does not exist.

Procedures

View our directory of operational procedures

Find a Surgeon

Search our database of aesthetic surgeons

Why use a BAAPS member?

Fully Trained

BAAPS Members are fully trained Plastic Surgeons. They have undergone a rigorous training programme. Currently this involves six years training in recognised training centres, undergoing regular assessment and examinations. They are taught cosmetic surgery in lectures, tutorials, courses and by demonstration. They are assisted in their early operations by experienced surgeons.

Registered with GMC

BAAPS Members are on the Specialist Register of Plastic Surgeons maintained by the General Medical Council. You can always check whether a surgeon is on the Specialist Register by telephoning the General Medical Council Registry line 0845 357 3456.

N.H.S. Consultants

BAAPS Members are all eligible to, or have taken up, Consultant Appointments in Plastic Surgery in the NHS.

GP Liaison

BAAPS Members accept referrals from General Practitioners and, if the patients are agreeable, keep the GPs informed of treatments.

Ongoing Training

BAAPS Members regularly attend instruction and scientific meetings organised by BAAPS. They also attend scientific meetings organised by sister National and International organisations.

Bupa Recognised

BAAPS Members are recognised by BUPA, PPP and other Health Insurance companies, although cosmetic surgery is not reimbursable, many related procedures are part of the medical treatment and reconstructive and would therefore be covered.

Reputable Clinics

BAAPS Members work in reputable hospitals and clinics- -eg. the private wings of NHS Trust hospitals, BUPA, Nuffield, Columbia Healthcare, The Wellington, The Portland. Within these hospitals they are working alongside other specialists able to give supporting care, who are also on the GMC Register in their own fields.

Unparalleled Knowledge

BAAPS Members have a breadth and depth of knowledge so that can fully advise patients of the range of treatments available.