

Plastic Surgery - Q & A



1. What are the different types of Plastic Surgery?

Plastic Surgery is a broad specialty, and possibly the oldest surgical specialty, practised since the time of Shusrutha, 2000 years ago. It is a specialty which does not get bound by age, anatomy or a particular pathology. In general it is divided into the following subspecialties:

- Craniofacial surgery
- Hand surgery
- Burns surgery
- Aesthetic surgery
- Wound care surgery
- Diabetic foot surgery

2. Is there a difference between cosmetic and reconstructive surgery?

Reconstructive and Aesthetic surgeries are two sides of a coin for Plastic surgery. The former is where the surgeon tries to get back what has been lost by trauma, infection or cancer. In Aesthetic surgery the surgeon tries to improve what is already present. In practice, a Plastic surgeon to achieve exemplary results, has to apply Reconstructive principles in Aesthetic surgery and Aesthetic principles in Reconstructive surgeries.

3. What are the parameters that are evaluated before a patient can undergo plastic surgery?

The general parameters for evaluating the patients for any surgery also apply to Plastic surgery. In addition a detailed evaluation and discussion has to be undertaken on:

- What is the problem?
 - What are the possible solutions?
 - What are the patients' requirements?
 - Whether the solutions match the patient's expectations?
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4. Is good physical condition a necessity for a patient to undergo plastic surgery?

A good physical condition directly corresponds to good wound healing and faster recovery, which is a positive factor for all branches of surgery. But it is not a must when Plastic surgery is performed in a situation to save the limb or life of a patient.

5. If a patient has a heart condition will plastic surgery be performed? If yes, under what conditions?

The general guidelines for any elective surgery is to optimise the heart condition beforehand, applies to Plastic surgery. In case of an emergency involving the life or limb, the benefits versus risks have to be evaluated and individualized decisions taken. As a risk reducing option many plastic surgery procedures can also be performed by peripheral nerve blocks or by infiltration of local anaesthesia.

6. What are the benefits of cosmetic surgery and what type of patients can undergo plastic surgery (example: does age or gender matter; or whether certain skin tones and types also undergo this procedure)?

We are living in an era where body image is given utmost importance. Beauty has been actively and passively defined by different cultures. In present world, appearance has become an added advantage even for some employments. So there are no limits for a person to undergo Aesthetic surgery based on his/her biology. Anti ageing surgery for face wrinkles, body contouring surgery after pregnancy, gynaecomastia surgery for young men, hair transplantation for baldness and scar correction surgeries have boosted the confidence and wellbeing of millions of people worldwide.

7. Does plastic surgeon treat Diabetic foot?

With diabetes being so common, the foot in diabetes tends to be affected. Burning of feet, numbness of feet, wounds in the foot which don't heal, and deformities of feet needs careful evaluation and treatment. Plastic surgeons have a great role to play in the management of the foot in diabetic subjects. Prescribing proper footwear is an integral part of management of the feet and experts in this field take care of this very important but often neglected area in the management of diabetic foot.

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