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Private Healthcare



Thinking about cosmetic surgery?

Adrian Richards, consultant plastic and reconstructive surgeon offers some advice

■ **Do your research**
Don't be driven by hype. Ensure that you thoroughly research the procedures available. Look for consultants who have a proven history in performing a certain procedure.

■ **Check your surgeon's credentials**
Ensure that the surgeon is on the specialist register with the General Medical Council which regulates the industry and ensures quality in medical practice. Look for a surgeon who is a member of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) or BAPRAS and also regularly conducts the type of procedure you are interested in.

■ **Talk to a past patient**
Try and talk to people who have been through the procedure that you are considering and also your family and friends who can help you make your decision, as it is always good to get an honest account. Check if your local hospital holds open evenings on cosmetic surgery where you would have the chance to learn more about the procedure you are interested in, meet the surgeons

and other people considering surgery.
See your GP

■ It is always a good idea to talk through your plans with your GP as they know your medical history and can talk in general about surgery. Good surgeons will want to work closely with your GP to ensure that they know your medical history and are kept informed about the surgery that you are having and any clinical examinations that have been performed.

■ **Be prepared for your consultation**
The consultation is your opportunity to ask any questions you have about the procedure you think you want. It might be useful to make a list in the days before your appointment and bring it with you.
The most important thing in a consultation is to be honest and frank with your surgeon, as they need as much information about you as possible in order to help make an informed assessment.

Your consultation should be with the surgeon who will be performing your procedure. Your

consultation so that you can thoroughly consider your options and talk to your friends and family to help you in your decision-making process.

■ **Get a price**
The hospital should offer a fixed price package which should include hospital fees, surgeon's fees, anaesthetist's fees, implant costs and all aftercare including dressings.

■ **Ongoing support**
Find out what kind of aftercare you will get. You need to be prepared and informed about what advice or free support can be provided.

Ask how many post-operative visits are included within an aftercare package and when they are likely to be. Ask what happens if you are unhappy with the results or if things don't go to plan?

In the event of acute complications arising within the first 100 days post-surgery, the hospital should be able to resolve them at no extra cost.

■ See page 3 for a case study

surgeon will discuss the alternatives with the pros and cons.

■ **Meet the team**
Get an idea of where you'll be going and its surroundings, the surgeon may be able to introduce you to the team who will be looking after you. It is important that you gain a visual perspective of where you'll be staying and who'll be caring for you.

■ **Take your time**
Embarking on cosmetic surgery is not something that should be rushed into.
Even if you are keen to have surgery, it isn't a decision to be taken lightly.
A good surgeon will give you time after your initial

consultation. It is much better to explain the problems you are experiencing or the changes you wish to make.
It is important to bear in mind that the procedure that you enquire about may not be the most suitable for you in order to achieve the results that you want. Depending on the problem, the