

# There Is No Bargain for Your Health: Expert Warns About Cosmetic Procedure “Deals”



In this economy, consumers are “penny-pinching” in all aspects of life, motivated to find the best deals available. But patients, as consumers, should be aware that there is no bargain when it comes to cosmetic procedures and that basement deals can result in scars, disfiguration, and for some even death.

Recently I have seen an increase in patients coming to me desperate for help in reversing botched procedures. Cosmetic procedures are medical procedures and should always be performed in a medical office or hospital setting by a board-certified dermatologist. I often propose the question, “Would you let a foot doctor perform brain surgery at a friend’s house?”

There are many people who claim to be board-certified dermatologists. Therefore, it is important to look beyond the diploma hanging on the office wall. I tell patients that they should call a professional dermatology association to ensure that a physician is indeed a board-certified dermatologist trained to perform the specific procedure.

If a deal is too good to be true, chances are it is. Patients should get multiple consultations and compare costs. If one cost is substantially lower than the others, then it should be ruled out. In addition, patients should ask physicians how many times they have performed the procedure, over how long a period of time, and how often. Patients also should ask to see before and after photographs.

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*The author reports no conflict of interest in relation to this article.*

Patients often make excuses for something not “feeling right.” It is important that patients not blame this feeling on nerves and speak up to cancel the procedure. People also tend to rely on the research of others and attend cosmetic parties. If a patient attends a party where cosmetic procedures are performed, chances are they have not had a chance to confirm that the person performing the procedures is a trained board-certified dermatologist.

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Many spas claim to have board-certified dermatologists on staff to perform cosmetic procedures. Patients should not be fooled. These “ghost doctors” may only visit the spa once a week and may not be present during procedures. It is important for patients to ask questions during the consultation about how often the dermatologist is on site.

Lastly, advise patients to speak up. If your patient or someone they know experienced a botched procedure, they should contact a board-certified dermatologist immediately. Waiting could result in further damage and even death.

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