

# #INSTADOCS

Instagram dos and don'ts for your practice.

BY WENDY LEWIS

Once the exclusive playground of millennials, Instagram, or “Insta” for short, has quickly evolved into a force to be reckoned with for brands and businesses including aesthetic practices. Medspas, clinics, and doctors are flocking to Instagram in droves. Is your practice one of them yet? If not, it's time to join the fun.

## SMILE YOU'RE ON INSTAGRAM

First thing's first: Sign up for an Instagram account, add a profile photo (a headshot for a personal account or a logo if it is a practice account) and a brief description. Next, link to your website, Twitter handle, and connect your Instagram to your Facebook page and announce to your fans and followers that you're on Instagram.

Now it's time to start following others who know you and are relevant to your practice. Like their photos and comment on their posts. The best way to cultivate a fan base is to follow like-minded users, follow back, and reciprocate to those who like, comment on, and share your posts.

Who you follow makes all the difference. Creating strategic relationships is key. For example, chances are that any Kardashian, Beyonce, and CNN won't follow back, but womensdermsociety, plasticsurgeryasps, Aafprs and theaestheticsocietyasaps likely will. Search for others to follow via popular and relevant hashtags, such as #plasticsurgery, #dermatology, and #skincare.

## INSTAGRAM ROAD RULES



**Do use relevant, searchable, popular hashtags when posting.**

This will help others see and follow your account.



**Do post once daily.**

Less than that and you lose momentum; more than that and you risk clogging up feeds with things your followers are not interested in or don't want to see.



**Do mix things up a little with images, videos, graphics, and memes.**

Instagram has a language and culture all its own. The biggest challenge for healthcare brands and practitioners is that it is all about visuals and videos. Text is used selectively, and often in the form of a string of catchy Instagram-specific hashtags. If you post the same kind of content every day, your feed will become a snoozefest and followers will quickly lose interest.

The keys to Instagram are creativity and inspiration. Attract your target market with content that connotes a compelling and inspiring story. The goal is to get your followers on board with your brand and encourage them to want to learn more.



**Do create provocative and eye-catching images.**

Think color, symmetry, form, and balance. Don't just upload any old snapshot of your lunch; if you're going to post about food, it should be something 'insta-worthy.' Think indulgent desserts, wine, colorful cocktails, champagne, coffee, seriously gorgeous sushi, and artfully plated dishes. Other popular Instagram themes are flowers, travel, beachfront scenery, great views, fashion, décor, and beauty and skincare products perform well.

On the flip side, too much text on an image, fuzzy, out of focus, or pixelated photos are sure to be overlooked. Instagrammers have an even shorter attention span than other social media users, and 100 percent of them are looking at their feeds on a mobile device because Insta is only an app.

To take your pics to the next level, popular photo-editing apps can help turbocharge your images, add text, filters, watermarks, and remove backgrounds. Check out the four- and five-star rated apps developed for Instagram efficiency, such as Uploader for Instagram, Instastack, and Instamaster.



**Do pay attention to the engagement you get on your posts see what your followers really care about.**

A photo of your new puppy or a staff member bringing her baby to the office may get a del-

# Chart

 400M+ Monthly Active Users

 75%+ Outside US

 40B+ Photos Shared

 3.5B Likes Daily

 80M+ Photos Per Day

SOURCE: <https://business.instagram.com/>



## ALL ABOUT INSTAGRAM

going on Instagram to look at intraoperative videos and reconstructive surgery.

Note to self: If you are posting visuals that have an 'ewww' factor, you are doing it wrong! The reaction you are going for is more like a 'wow' or 'aww.'

**Don't post any patient photos without express consent.**

HIPAA became a reality long before Insta took over the world, and the two are clearly not sympatico.

**Do entrust your Instagram to someone who has good taste, an artistic eye, and who understands precisely who your target clientele is.**

If there isn't someone on your team who fits the bill, consider outsourcing your social media, preferably not to an unknown techie in Southeast Asia who knows nothing about your brand.

Instagram offers up a host of advantages for an aesthetic practice. It allows you to market your services in a very creative fashion and directly engage with current and prospective patients. Done right, an Insta account can be a tremendous asset to your digital marketing campaign. Done wrong, it can be a waste of valuable time and resources. ■

uge of likes and comments, whereas a special deal on a filler or a purely promotional post may go unnoticed.

It is one thing to push occasional pics of a lip filler, glycolic peel, tattoo removal, or even a cute rhinoplasty, but quality over quantity should prevail. If you are posting a stream of full-body photos with pasties to cover nipples and private parts, it may be offensive to some. Furthermore, no one is really



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