



Proof That Bedside Manner is a Contributing Factor to a Successful Practice

By Wendy Lewis

In case you weren't convinced that plastic surgeons and their staff who show kindness, empathy, and caring to patients is a winning strategy, a recent study published in the *Aesthetic Surgery Journal* may convince you.

Researchers conducting this study—*The Makings of a Positive Patient Experience: A Comprehensive Analysis of Plastic Surgery Online Reviews*.¹

The authors concluded that, “While aesthetic outcome is an important predictor of satisfaction, other aspects of care, such as bedside manner and staff interaction, provide an important foundation of support. Excellent patient-surgeon communication and postoperative care may mitigate patient dissatisfaction and elicit high-satisfaction online patient reviews.”

The researchers compared the top predictive factors driving patient satisfaction across the most popular plastic surgery procedures. They found that aesthetic outcomes are important, but not the ONLY predictors of satisfaction, as published in the *Aesthetic Surgery Journal* (April 13, 2022).

They analyzed 11,078 online reviews from RealSelf, Yelp and Google for the five highest-rated plastic surgeons in six metropolitan areas. Data from the reviews included physician ratings, patient-reported reasons for rating, procedure and complications. Not surprisingly, reconstructive procedures were rated significantly higher than cosmetic procedures, while aesthetic appearance was the strongest predictor of rating across all procedures.

It seems understandable that patients would hold surgeons who perform reconstructive surgery (notably breast reconstruction) in high regard. This can be a very different relationship in some ways.



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Reconstructive surgeons are often thought of as heroes because they are able to restore a patient's image and thus, self-confidence.

I found this study to be consistent with what I believe are current consumers' views on aesthetic practitioners. In my opinion, negative views about plastic surgeons often stem from social media posts that cross a line, the constant coverage that consumers see on television and online, and the ongoing plethora of media coverage of disasters, celebrity mishaps and regrets. Every time consumers see a 'plastic surgeon' behaving badly, it contributes to a less than glorious

image of all 'plastic surgeons' in the public domain.

Regrettably, in many cases, these doctors are not really 'plastic surgeons' by your standards at all. The term has morphed into an umbrella phrase to describe anyone who yields a scalpel or a syringe. In its lowest form, tabloids make zero distinction for credentials at all, perhaps driven by the enhanced clicks and views they may get from using the term 'plastic surgeon.'

In 2022, it matters far too little to many consumers whether a doctor is 'board certified' and which board, or a member of this illustrious society or another one, or just an MD or DO who does some cosmetic procedures and is mistakenly referred to as a 'plastic surgeon' or 'cosmetic surgeon.' Despite the education that this organization does so well, it can be difficult for consumers and media, who are often driven to someone who calls himself 'a celebrity doctor' on Instagram, to make the distinction.

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