

# Preparing for Your Cosmetic Surgery Consultation



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## Step 2

In the previous article, the factors that are important in selecting a plastic surgeon for your cosmetic surgery consultation were discussed. Good sources of referral are O.R. nurses, your family physician, dermatologist or ob/gyn. You should check the malpractice history of the physician and determine if the plastic surgeon is board certified by the American Society of Plastic Surgery. Once you have decided on two or three qualified plastic surgeons, how should you prepare for the

one-on-one consultation?

Before attending the consultation, create a priority list of procedures you wish to discuss. Patients frequently wish to discuss many different procedures. Decide which is the most important to you. By doing this, you will be afforded enough time to get meaningful, in-depth information. Discussion of one procedure requires a minimum of 15 minutes to as long as one hour for more involved operations. Do your homework and read about the procedure. Although the internet is a wonderful source of information, do not always take every bit of information as factual and accurate. Create a list of questions on paper about the procedure. Do not think that just remembering them without writing them down is enough. You will invariably forget a number of important questions.

With this information completed, you are about to enter the plastic surgeon's office. Is the office clean immaculate in every respect? The presentation of the office is a reflection of not only the surgeon, but also of the staff. Do you feel comfortable in the space? Is there meaningful informa-

tion about the plastic surgeon available? Are you greeted warmly, by name, "Good morning Ms \_\_\_\_\_,"? Is the staff dressed professionally? Sweat pants and scrub suits may be appropriate for jogging and the operating room, but are not part of medical office attire. After you have signed in and provided the necessary information, are you given information regarding the procedure you wish to discuss? Do you have time to review this information? How long do you have to wait before seeing the surgeon? While surgeons are often controlled by operating room schedules and emergencies, most physicians allocate at least two days per week for patient consultations. On those days, patients have a priority. If the staff has scheduled patients properly, you should not have to wait more than 15 minutes. There is rarely a justified reason for waiting longer. Patients have schedules and responsibilities and making a patient wait is not only impolite but also disrespectful to them.

In next month's article, the one-on-one consultation with the plastic surgeon will be discussed.