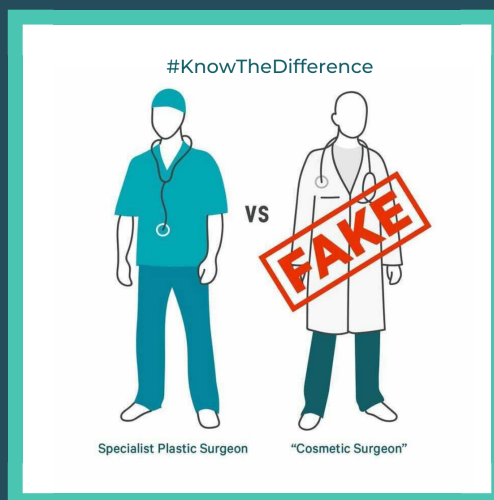


# WHEN YOUR CHOICE OF SURGEON MAKES A DIFFERENCE



## The ASAPS Guide to Choose the Right Plastic Surgeon



# WHY THE CHOICE OF YOUR SURGEON MATTERS

Patients who are considering cosmetic surgery are constantly bombarded by clever ads on social media that makes it hard to know **WHO IS A REGISTERED SURGEON AND WHO IS NOT.**

Every year thousands of patients across Australia and New Zealand, mostly women, who seek cosmetic surgery unknowingly risking their lives and livelihoods at the hands of operators who have neither accredited specialist training nor specialist registration but overstate their credentials by using the title "Cosmetic Surgeon" and mislead the public.

Some practitioners who are not lawfully registered as specialists in Plastic Surgery self-title themselves as 'Cosmetic Surgeons' and mislead the public.

With certain practitioners withholding the truth regarding their title and accredited training, patients find it hard to make a safe and informed choice.

ASAPS has realised that patients may be unclear about their surgeon's registration, skills, training, unaware of potential risks and are often lured by cheap deals. We believe it's crucial that patients know how to choose the right surgeon to obtain the right result.

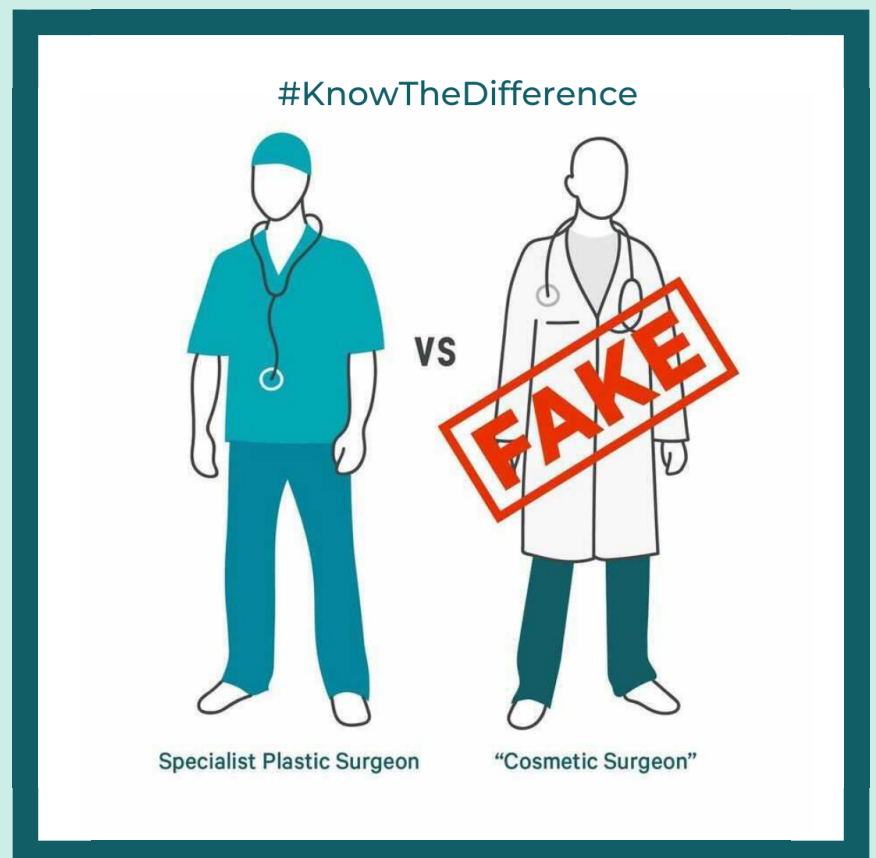
With patient safety front and centre, ASAPS has created this guide to tell you what to look out for and what to avoid so that you can select the right surgeon.

**WHEN IT COMES TO COSMETIC SURGERY YOUR CHOICE OF SURGEON DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

# 7 CRITICAL QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR SURGEON

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1. Is your Surgeon registered as a Specialist Surgeon by AHPRA in Australia and the MCNZ in New Zealand?
2. Is your surgeon a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (FRACS)?
3. Will your surgery be performed in a hospital licensed and accredited to perform Cosmetic Surgery?
4. How many years' experience does your surgeon have doing this procedure?
5. Does your surgeon work with a Specialist Anaesthetist?
6. What aftercare treatment does your surgeon offer?
7. What do other patients who have done this surgery say about their experience?



# WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR IN YOUR SURGEON?

## REGISTRATION & QUALIFICATIONS

We have three words for you: **Specialist Plastic Surgeon.**

Many patients think that a cosmetic surgeon and a specialist plastic surgeon are one and the same thing – **BUT THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE IN QUALIFICATIONS AND SPECIALIST REGISTRATION.**

- One is registered as a Specialist Surgeon and the other is not.
- One has completed AMC accredited specialist postgraduate training in Plastic Surgery to the highest Australian/New Zealand standards whereas the other has not.

The best way to tell the difference between a Specialist Plastic Surgeon and a Cosmetic Surgeon? Look out for the letters “**FRACS**” appearing after your Surgeon’s name that denotes that

- ✓ Your Surgeon has completed AMC accredited specialist postgraduate training in Plastic Surgery to the highest Australian/New Zealand standards
- ✓ Your Surgeon is registered as a Specialist Surgeon by AHPRA in Australia and the MCNZ in New Zealand

You can check whether your surgeon is a registered specialist surgeon.

- Specialist Plastic Surgeons in Australia must be registered with AHPRA in Australia or MCNZ in New Zealand.
- You can do a search for their area of specialist registration on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency ([AHPRA](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)) [website](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) or the [Medical Council of NZ website](http://www.medicalcouncil.org.nz).



# GET THE FACTS

## Know the Difference



### 8-12 more years

Only those who have completed an additional 8-12 years of training beyond their medical degree, including AMC accredited specialist surgical training, can lawfully use the title Plastic Surgeon.

### 100%

of ASAPS members are recognised by AHPRA, the AMC and Medicare as specialists in plastic surgery, and have 8-12 years of specialist surgical training beyond their degree.

### 93%

of Australians agree that it would be easier for patients to differentiate between surgeons and doctors, if all practitioners were to go by their official AHPRA title.\*

### ~60%

of cosmetic surgery patients would have chosen differently if they knew their doctors were not qualified plastic surgeons.†

### 86%

of Australians agree that any doctor without any surgical training who is using the title 'surgeon' is wrong.\*

### Training & experience

Consumers often conclude that a cosmetic surgeon is best qualified to undertake a cosmetic procedure without recognising the gap in experience and training between a cosmetic surgeon and a registered specialist plastic surgeon.

### THE LAW

Only doctors registered as specialists in the recognised speciality of 'plastic surgery' can call themselves 'Plastic Surgeons'.

### THE FAKE TITLE

Cosmetic surgery is not recognised as a separate speciality. Doctors with NO specialist surgical registration portray themselves as surgeons by using the fake title, 'Cosmetic Surgeon'.

### AUSTRALIANS EXPECT SURGEONS TO FOLLOW THE LAW

[ 93% of Australians expect all doctors to only use their official AHPRA title\* ]

AHPRA REGISTERED  
SPECIALIST  
PLASTIC SURGEON



VS

UNREGISTERED  
"COSMETIC"  
SURGEON



Practitioners who are not registered, specialist health practitioners must not falsely claim to be so. Individuals and bodies found guilty of false claims, can be fined up to \$120,000, 3 years imprisonment or both.

Check your surgeon: [www.aestheticplasticsurgeons.org.au/your-safety](http://www.aestheticplasticsurgeons.org.au/your-safety)

### Risk of harm

Some of these 'cosmetic surgeons' hold elementary medical degrees, which exposes consumers to a greater risk of harm or negative outcome.

### 92%

of Australians believe that a patient's safety is put at risk when a doctor performs surgery without surgical training.\*

### 77%

of Australians agree that banning the term "cosmetic surgeon" would help patients to separate the doctors from the surgeons.\*

### 81%

of Australians agree that the title of 'Cosmetic Surgeon' implies that a doctor is a registered specialist.\*

### 90%

of cosmetic surgery patients choose non-accredited surgeons because they believe they are less expensive and have visible online and social media profiles.†

### Uninformed decisions

There is a critical need for consumers to become better informed on the correct titles and levels of expertise, in order to make informed decisions that result in the best, possible outcomes.

\*Source: McNair Study on Patient Safety in Cosmetic Surgery (2019) †Source: ASAPS Cosmetic Surgery and Non-Surgical Complications Questionnaire (2019)



## PATIENT CARE

Once you have ensured that your Surgeon is a Registered Specialist in Plastic Surgery by AHPRA or MCNZ, it is time for you to **schedule a consultation**.

Cosmetic surgery is about helping you achieve your personal aesthetic goals and the consultation process provides vital time for you to **ask your surgeon every question** you have about your surgery so that you reach a mutual understanding about **what is realistic** and what is likely result of the operation.

Specialist Plastic Surgeons are trained professionals who are registered as specialists in Plastic Surgery who will **ensure your safety** at all times and at all costs. They will ensure that you don't have unrealistic, unattainable expectations that can be swayed by images you view on social media. It's essential that you feel that you can trust your surgeon who, in addition to the right training, qualifications and years of experience, also provides the necessary support and **excellent standard of care**.

# THE FINAL CHECKLIST

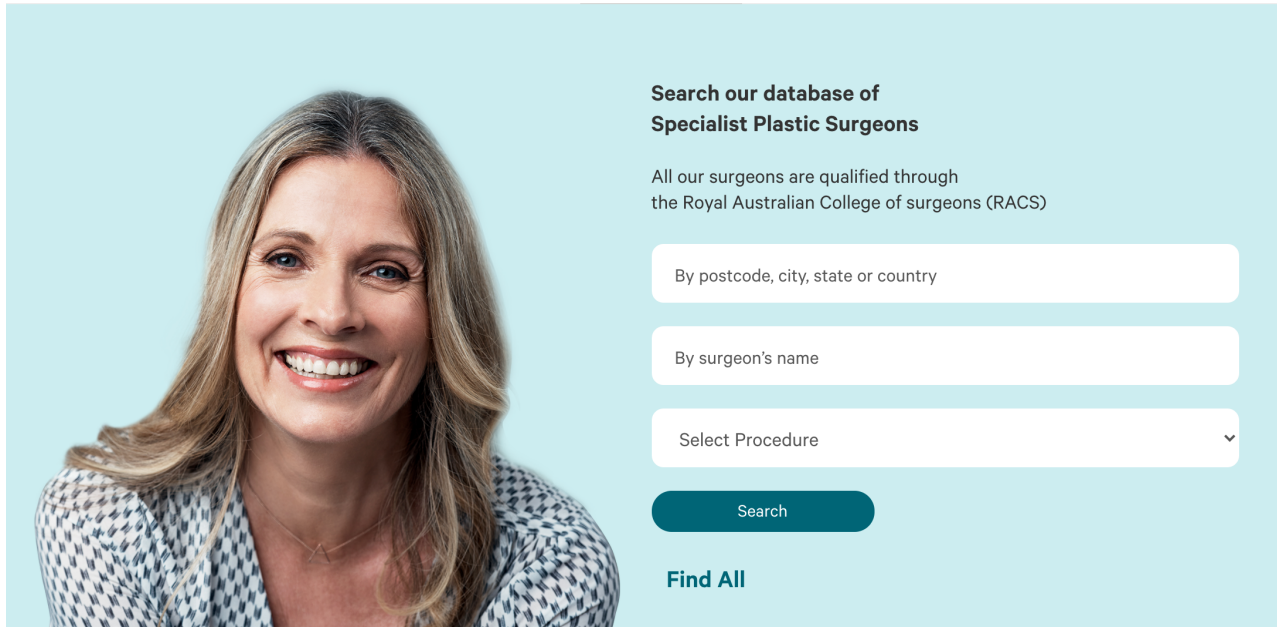
## KNOW YOUR SURGEON BEFORE YOU COMMIT

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- ✓ Your surgeon **must be registered** as a Specialist in Plastic Surgery by AHPRA and MCNZ
- ✓ Your surgeon should perform procedures at an **accredited hospital** licensed for cosmetic surgery
- ✓ Your surgeon should have completed **AMC accredited postgraduate surgical training** in plastic surgery
- ✓ Your surgeon must be a **RACS Fellow** with FRACS after his or her name
- ✓ Your surgeon must complete **ongoing CPD** of the RACS to stay up to date with the latest knowledge, techniques and best practice to improve patient outcomes

# DID YOU KNOW..?

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You can use the **Search function 'Find your Surgeon'** on the ASAPS website to look up your surgeon's qualifications, their practice, and whether they're registered with AHPRA/MCNZ.

You must ensure that your surgeon is registered as a specialist surgeon by **AHPRA** in Australia and the **MCNZ** in New Zealand.

Using this search can help you find out whether your **surgeon is a Specialist Plastic Surgeon** so that you know you're in safe hands when it comes to your procedure.