

**EMBARGOED UNTIL SEPT 26, 2011**

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## **NEW LAWS, TV ADS EXPOSE *WHITE COAT DECEPTION*** World's largest organization of board-certified plastic surgeons takes action

**Denver, Colorado**, September 26, 2011 – The world's largest organization of board-certified [plastic surgeons](#) is taking action to warn patients to investigate their doctor's qualifications before undergoing plastic surgery procedures.

[The American Society of Plastic Surgeons](#) (ASPS) is launching a new public safety campaign on the heels of a string of incidents involving plastic surgeries gone wrong during procedures performed by non-board-certified plastic surgeons.\* The ASPS will unveil their new campaign on September 26, 2011 during the ASPS Annual Meeting in Denver.

“Patients are getting injured, some are dying during procedures performed by non-board-certified plastic surgeons,” said Malcolm Z. Roth, MD, ASPS President. “We want patients to understand what to ask their doctor and what to look for so that they can maximize their chance of a safe and successful procedure.”

The message in the new ASPS Public Service Announcement focuses on exposing what [plastic surgery](#) industry leaders call “white coat deception.” Roth explained that just because a doctor wears a white coat does not mean he or she is qualified to perform plastic surgery.

“There is a misconception among consumers that as long as a doctor is certified in a medical field that he or she is qualified to practice plastic surgery. This is absolutely wrong and it is dangerous for patients,” said Dr. Roth. “If you are considering a plastic surgery procedure it is critical that your doctor is a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. This is the best way to be certain that he or she has completed the necessary training and meets certain standards to practice plastic surgery.”

Consumers may wonder how doctors who are not board certified in plastic surgery are able to perform such procedures. The reason is that it is perfectly legal in the United States for any doctor with a medical license to practice in any medical field. Only four states -- California, Florida, Louisiana and Texas -- have tough Truth-In-Advertising measures on the books which require medical providers to be more transparent about their training.

“Today when you get your medical license you can practice in any medical field that you choose,” said Dr. Steven Teitelbaum, MD, an ASPS Member Surgeon who practices in the Los Angeles area. “What should happen is that every state medical board should say, ‘if you’re trained in pediatrics you are allowed to practice pediatrics and if you’re trained in orthopedics

you can practice orthopedics.’ But, unfortunately, most state laws and regulations enable some physicians to drift into the practice of plastic surgery without proper training and certification. It has become increasingly apparent that some physicians fail to use proper judgment and enter into practice areas beyond their core training,” he said.

Dr. Teitelbaum said that he is seeing an increase in requests to “fix” botched plastic surgery procedures from non-board-certified plastic surgeons such as in the case of his patient Dinora Rodriguez.

Rodriguez had [breast implant](#) surgery from a non-board-certified plastic surgeon and woke up horrified to learn that her implants were merged together. During the same procedure her previous doctor decided to operate on her eyes without her consent. Now Dinora can no longer close her eyes completely.

“It was a terrible experience waking up from surgery and seeing that this had happened. I didn’t know to check my doctor’s qualifications and I regret it,” said Rodriguez.

The ASPS has these tips for validating your doctor’s qualifications:

- Ask if your doctor is board certified in plastic surgery by the American Board of Plastic Surgery.
- Look for a certificate in the doctor’s office that includes the seal of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.
- If you have any doubts about their certification go to [www.plasticsurgery.org](http://www.plasticsurgery.org) and click on “Find a Surgeon” to see if your doctor is listed on the ASPS site.

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons is the largest organization of board-certified plastic surgeons in the world. Representing more than 7,000 physician members, the Society is recognized as a leading authority and information source on cosmetic and reconstructive plastic surgery. ASPS comprises more than 94 percent of all board-certified plastic surgeons in the United States. Founded in 1931, the Society represents physicians certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. For more information visit [www.plasticsurgery.org](http://www.plasticsurgery.org).

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B-ROLL and SOUND BITES -- Including broadcast quality video: <http://bit.ly/mQ4WjK%20>. (Multimedia Newsroom is password protected until embargo lifts. Please contact media relations representative listed below for password prior to embargo.)

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\*RESEARCH: Recent media coverage from plastic surgery incidents:

<http://www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/basics/story/2011-09-13/cosmetic-surgery-investigation/50395494/1>

<http://www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/basics/story/2011-09-14/risks-low-cost-cosmetic-surgery/50409740/1>

HYPERLINK "<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2011/02/08/woman-dies-butt-injection-hotel/>" [http://](http://www.foxnews.com/health/2011/02/08/woman-dies-butt-injection-hotel/)

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