

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Sunday 18 June 2023

### **More than a third of Australians considering cosmetic surgery**

ALMOST seven million Australians, or 38% of the adult population, are considering undergoing cosmetic surgery in the next 10 years, according to surprising new research.

And almost half are doing so to ‘feel better about themselves’ - pointing to a desire by Australians of all ages to take control of their looks and image in the digital age.

The Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery and Medicine research, the first of its kind in Australia, finds that patients are happy with their surgical results (88%), with 41% “highly satisfied”.

Cosmetic surgery in Australia is booming. More than \$1 billion is spent every year on more than 500,000 procedures, making it more popular per capita than the United States.

The ACCSM research examines the ten most popular cosmetic surgical procedures - rhinoplasty (nose surgery), breast augmentation, blepharoplasty (eyelift), rhytidectomy (facelift), lipoplasty (liposuction), abdominoplasty (“tummy tuck”), platysmaplasty (neck and chin surgery), brachioplasty (arm lift surgery), gluteal lift (“Brazilian butt lift”), and genital surgery (labiaplasty or phalloplasty). The research reveals differences between age, state, and gender.

“Millennials aged between 23 and 42 are undergoing cosmetic surgery at a greater rate than any other generation,” ACCSM President Dr Anoop Rastogi said today.

“This suggests the ‘pressure for perfection’ created by social media could be contributing to an idealistic version of what we should look like, even if patients are happy with their surgical results.

“The College advocates for awareness and caution among practitioners, to guide and advise their patients towards good decision-making.”

From July 1, new safeguards will take effect in Australia to protect cosmetic surgery patients.

The Australian Medical Board’s new standards will allow patients to see which practitioners have AMC accreditation in cosmetic surgery.

Internationally cosmetic surgery is on the rise.

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In the United States, patients report they want to look younger and improve how they feel about their appearance, with almost half (47%) of surgeons seeing a rise in demand.<sup>1</sup>

Lipoplasty (liposuction), rhytidectomy (facelift), breast augmentation, and abdominoplasty (“tummy tuck”) are the most popular surgeries in the US, in contrast to Australia where rhinoplasty (nose job), breast augmentation, and blepharoplasty (eyelifts) are the most common. In the US, trends include patients seeking combination procedures (undergoing more than one procedure during surgery).

### **Key Findings**

#### **Generational differences**

- **Millennials** want to undergo cosmetic surgery more than any other age group. One in four Aussies aged 23-42 have had cosmetic surgery (22%) in the past. This rises to 59% of Millennials considering it in the next decade, compared to 45% of Gen Xers (aged 43-58) and 28% of Boomers (aged 59-77).
- **Millennials** are also the most willing to travel overseas to undergo surgery (34%) – and more than half (53%) of the Millennials getting cosmetic surgery do so to feel better about themselves.
- **Millennials** are also the most likely generation to lie about it, with 11% confessing they “sometimes” lie about cosmetic work they have had done.
- **Gen X**, aged between 43 and 58, want to look younger, with a greater proportion of them opting for a facelift than any other generation (25%). This suggests that insecurity about looks is a hallmark of entering middle age.
- **Baby boomers**, aged between 59 and 77, are the happiest about their cosmetic outcomes, with half (50%) “highly satisfied” with their surgery.

#### **Women vs. men**

- **Men** overwhelmingly undergo surgery on their faces, suggesting they are sensitive about their looks, but less so about their physiques. The most popular procedures are facelifts (36%), eyelifts (24%), and rhinoplasty (29%).
- In contrast, **women** want to improve their bodies, with the most popular procedures being breast enlargement or reduction (31%), tummy tucks (10%) and liposuction (14%).
- More women are happier with their new bodies (88%) than men are with their faces (85%).

#### **State-by-state comparison**

- 19% of Western Australian respondents have had cosmetic surgery in the past at least once, compared with 17% in NSW, 16% in Queensland, 15% in Victoria and 9% in Tasmania.
- **But over the next decade the picture changes**, with 47% of ACT respondents considering cosmetic surgical improvement, followed by Tasmanians (43%), Queenslanders (40%), Western Australians (39%), South Australians (38%), Victorians and NSW residents tied on 37% and Northern Territorians at 33%.

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<sup>1</sup> [Inaugural ASPS Insights and Trends Report: Cosmetic Surgery 2022](#)

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- **Victorians and Western Australians are the most definitive about their intentions to get cosmetic surgery in the next decade**, with 19% answering “yes” to the question, the highest percentages in the country.
- **New South Wales is the most bashful state** – with the highest proportion of cosmetic surgery patients confessing to “sometimes” lying about the work they have had done.
- **Queensland is the recovery stats with more than half (51%) undergoing cosmetic surgery to ‘correct’ their appearance.** Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world<sup>2</sup>, suggesting they are focused on repairing chronic sun damage.
- **Queenslanders trust a medical recommendation when it comes to selecting a cosmetic surgeon (47%)** – but South Australians look up reviews from former patients (38%).
- **South Australians are not keen to head overseas for cosmetic surgery – the highest “no” in the country (82%)** – South Australians rank patient understanding of the procedure the most important part of undergoing surgery higher than any other region (14%).
- **ACT residents have been the most reluctant cosmetic surgical patients to date**, with only 6% having undergone a procedure, but rises rapidly to 47% considering surgery in the next 10 years. This represents an enormous shift in ACT thinking.

### **How do Australians choose a cosmetic surgeon?**

- **Australians exercise responsibility when looking for a cosmetic surgeon, largely making the decision based on advice** - whether it be a recommendation from a medical professional (37%), from word-of-mouth chatter (28%), or from reviews from former patients (20%).
- **Boomers (59-77) place the highest value in patient reviews (41%)**, but they are also far more likely to factor in availability (17%) of the surgeon.

Dr Rastogi said Australians should make wise decisions when choosing a cosmetic surgeon, avoiding cheap overseas options, and making sure their surgeon of choice in Australia is qualified.

The new AMC accreditation standards will take effect on July 1.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wcrf.org/cancer-trends/skin-cancer-statistics/>

## Survey Results

### Part I: Current trends

**Table 2: Most popular cosmetic surgeries**

Answer	Resp. %
1. Rhinoplasty (nose surgery)	27%
2. Breast augmentation	26%
3. Blepharoplasty (eyelift)	20%
4. Rhytidectomy (facelift)	18%
5. Liposuction (lipoplasty)	13%
6. Abdominoplasty (tummy tuck)	8%
7. Platysmaplasty (neck and chin surgery)	7%
8. Brachioplasty (arm lift surgery)	7%
9. Gluteal lift (Brazilian butt lift)	4%
10. Genital surgery (labiaplasty or phalloplasty)	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>133%*</b>

\*Note: the total is more than 100% as a minority of respondents had undergone more than one procedure.

**Table 3: Reasons for having had cosmetic surgery**

Answer	Resp. %
1. Improve self-esteem	45%
2. Repair, improve, or correct appearance after health issue	39%
3. Be better looking	11%
4. Look younger	5%
5. Look like a celebrity	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4: Surgical outcomes**

Answer	Resp. %
1. Highly satisfied	41%
2. Somewhat satisfied	47%
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9%
4. Somewhat dissatisfied	2%
5. Highly dissatisfied	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

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**Table 5:** How Australians choose cosmetic surgeons

Answer	Resp. %
1. Medical recommendation	37%
2. Word-of-mouth recommendation	28%
3. Reviews from former patients	20%
4. Availability of surgeon	7%
5. Cost	6%
6. Website	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6:** Have you ever lied about having had cosmetic surgery or a non-invasive cosmetic procedure done?

Answer	Resp. %
1. Always	1%
2. Sometimes	7%
3. Rarely	5%
4. Never	52%
5. Not applicable	35%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Part II: Future trends

**Table 7:** Australians considering cosmetic surgery in the next 10 years

Answer	Resp. %
1. Yes	16%
2. Maybe	22%
3. Unsure	16%
4. Probably not	20%
5. No	26%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8:** Australians considering cosmetic surgery in the next 10 years

Answer	Millennials	Gen X	BB
1. Yes	34%	25%	12%
2. Maybe	25%	20%	16%
3. Unsure	17%	20%	16%
4. Probably not	12%	14%	15%
5. No	12%	22%	41%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

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**Table 9: Australians considering cosmetic surgery in the next 10 years**

Answer	Men	Women
6. Yes	12%	29%
7. Maybe	20%	21%
8. Unsure	19%	18%
9. Probably not	18%	12%
10. No	31%	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	100%

**Table 10: Australians considering cosmetic surgery in the next 10 years**

Answer	NSW	QLD	VIC	SA	WA	ACT	TAS	NT
11. Yes	14%	17%	19%	14%	19%	12%	13%	0%
12. Maybe	23%	24%	18%	24%	19%	35%	30%	33%
13. Unsure	17%	15%	17%	15%	9%	0%	22%	17%
14. Probably not	20%	19%	19%	19%	22%	29%	9%	33%
15. No	26%	25%	27%	28%	30%	24%	26%	17%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Table 11: Why Australians are considering cosmetic surgery**

Answer	Resp. %
1. Repair, improve, or correct appearance after previous injury or health issue	31%
2. Improve my self-esteem	24%
3. Be better-looking	11%
4. Look younger	11%
5. Look like a celebrity	0%
6. I would not have cosmetic surgery	23%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%

**Table 12: Would you travel, or have you travelled overseas for a cosmetic surgery procedure?**

Answer	Resp. %
1. I have not but I would travel overseas for a cosmetic surgery procedure	25%
2. I have not and I would not travel overseas for a cosmetic surgery procedure	68%
3. I have travelled overseas for a cosmetic surgery procedure, and I would do it again	3%
4. I have travelled overseas for a cosmetic surgery procedure, but I would not do it again	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%

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**Table 13:** Regardless of whether you have had cosmetic surgery, what do you think is most important for cosmetic patients?

Answer	Resp. %
1. Safety, security, and hygiene	39%
2. Accredited and qualified surgeons and professionals performing the procedures	29%
3. Understanding of procedure and risks	12%
4. Surgical or procedural outcome meeting expectations	8%
5. Affordability	7%
6. Recovery time	4%
7. Support and understanding from friends, family, and workplace	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### About the survey

A nationally representative survey of 1,000 respondents was facilitated by PureProfile on behalf of ACCSM. Please note the sample size of “non-binary” respondents was too small for inclusion in this research.

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### About the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery & Medicine

Established as the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery in 1999, the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery & Medicine (ACCSM) is a not-for-profit, multi-disciplinary fellowship-based body of cosmetic surgeons, cosmetic physicians, plastic surgeons, general surgeons, maxillofacial surgeons, ear nose and throat surgeons, ophthalmologists and other doctors and health care practitioners who practice in cosmetic medicine and surgery. The primary goal of the ACCSM is to ensure the safe provision of cosmetic medical and cosmetic surgical procedures to the Australian community through the supply of appropriately trained and certified health care practitioners. The ACCSM is the only medical college which provides education and training leading to fellowship specifically in cosmetic medicine and surgery. Fellows of the College are medical doctors who have completed post-graduate education and training and demonstrated competency specifically in cosmetic medicine and surgery. For additional information about the ACCSM, please visit: <http://www.accsm.org.au/>