

"Be body aware and approach celebrity surgery trends with caution" says the Plastic Surgery Group

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The trend for cosmetic surgery is ever-growing, even with youngsters who haven't even had a chance to wrinkle, droop or deflate yet. But while there's nothing wrong with a little enhancement, rising rates of body dysmorphia and pressures to conform to a certain image could lead to exposure to surgical and psychological risks. With TOWIE's Jess Wright recently opening up about her boob-job regrets, is it time to better-educate would-be patients?

Last year, more than 50,000 people in the UK underwent cosmetic surgery - something that former BAAPS President Rajiv Grover assigns at least partially to celebrity influence. But whether you're going under the knife like Jess, or choosing an 'injectable' enhancement such as botox or lip fillers, it may pay to listen to the stars before you take the plunge with the scalpel or syringe.

Jess Wright's former TOWIE screen mate, Lauren Goodger, also recently stepped back from her previous quest for the perfect pout, posting: "I've finally taken that plunge to put it all right #byesho #byefiller" on her Instagram page.

Risks and reasons

Some regrets are more easily remedied than others – so with surgeries and other procedures carrying a number of potential risks, and the possibility that the outcome won't actually make you happier, how do you make the right decision?

Mo Akhavan, cosmetic specialist at The Plastic Surgery Group says: "A thorough consultation and transparent advice are essential, even if the patient is looking for a seemingly low risk procedure like Botox. Injectables are medicines, so need to be treated with respect – even paracetamol has severe safety risks and that's available over the counter."

Administered correctly, botox is considered safe, but there's research to suggest that it crosses over into the central nervous system - and as a relatively new treatment, it's hard to say what long-term effects may be discovered. There are shorter-term effects to be aware of too, such as the ulcers, inflammation, pain and swelling that can be a by-product of lip fillers.

The prevalence of body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) is also an issue that needs addressing; a 2015 study indicates that between 2.9% and 53.6% of patients requesting cosmetic surgery - and over 1 in 100 UK men

and women – suffer with the disorder. Such a broad statistic shows that more research is needed, and also highlights the need for psychological support to be made available to potential patients.

Dr Akhavani's colleague, Dan Marsh comments: "Any kind of surgery carried out for the wrong reason is detrimental to a patient's wellbeing – whether that's a hip replacement or a breast augmentation. If a patient is displaying any signs of BDD, they need to be properly assessed by a specialist plastic surgery psychologist. Surgery is generally not the answer in many of these cases."

For the 18-35 age group who are frantically racing to keep up with the latest look and celebrity styles, a little surgery doesn't feel like a big deal. But as Jess Wright laments over her own op: "I was happy with them at first but I was younger - times have changed and fashion has changed".

"Ultimately, a surgeon has a responsibility to care for their patient by providing all information and educating them about any risks," says Dr Marsh, "these types of procedures are not to be taken or given lightly. Mental health should always be as much of a consideration as the physical, and patients need to be given alternative support if surgery is deemed inappropriate."