Letter to the Editor

Covid-19 Pandemic: An Impending Threat to Aesthetic Surgery Procedures

Veena Singh

Burns & Plastic Surgery, All India Institute of Plastic Surgery, Patna, Bihar, India

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DEAR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The spread of global pandemic has put a sudden halt to all elective and non-essential surgical procedures all over the world. These surgeries included those of general surgery, gastrosurgery, CTVS, Neurosurgery, ENT, Orthopedics, Endocrine surgery, and Gynecologic surgery. In Plastic surgery, the major brunt during outbreak was on aesthetic surgeries. Elective procedures like abdominoplasty, face lift, thighplasty, brachioplasty, augmentation and reduction mammoplasties, mastopexy and all non-surgical facial rejuvenation procedures were postponed for indefinite period both on the surgeons and patients ends. Suddenly the need for survival was greatest and the whole world went back to primitive era where only need based essential works were done for maintaining the earthly existence.

In modern world, those who can afford have always yearned for luxurious facilities or services, one of them being aesthetic surgery whose aura is like the two facets of the same coin. As plastic surgeons, we understand the essential nature of the procedure according to the patients' attitude, work profile and psychological status. But there are many who will criticize the requirement of such procedures. They held the opinion that the surgeons do it for fame and money and patients undergo surgery for improving their appearance which in their eyes is not a functional indication. There have been many arguments and controversies regarding the need of aesthetic surgery. The WHO definition of health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity stands true in aesthetic surgery indications[1]. Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices[2].

The fear among plastic surgeons during whole pandemic is that will the face value of aesthetic surgery be lost during and after the pandemic is over. Will people start believing that having a better aesthetic appearance has no relationship with the existence of mankind? New questions will also continue intriguing the patients - even if I want

***Corresponding Author:**

Veena Singh

Burns & Plastic Surgery, All India Institute of Plastic Surgery, Patna, Bihar, India

Email: drsveena@gmail.com

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to look better, will it help me in a longer survival? What if I contact covid-19 while undergoing the surgery? What if I undergo a successful surgery but later succumb to covid-19? Shall I spend more on ensuring my physical health and family security or spend on improvement of appearance which will in turn improve my confidence?

The aesthetic surgeons must think over these questions and have to increase their zeal and drive for creating awareness among the patients especially in the background of life- threatening Covid 19 infections. They should also keep in mind the impact of post Covid systemic complications on the outcome of aesthetic procedures. The time will soon come for not only re-starting the services but also rejuvenating the thinking and mind of people, media etc.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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