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Comprehensive Breast & Aesthetic Surgery

Elegant · Elevated · Experience

PATIENT DECISION GUIDE · COSMETIC SURGERY

Am I a Good Candidate for Cosmetic Surgery?

A guide to help you evaluate your readiness for cosmetic surgery — before the procedure conversation begins.

FACTORS THAT SUPPORT CANDIDACY

- Good general health with well-controlled medical conditions
- Non-smoker — or complete cessation at least 6 weeks before surgery
- At or within 10–15 lbs of a stable goal weight (body procedures)
- Realistic expectations about results, recovery, and timeline
- Motivated by personal desire — not external pressure
- Stable life circumstances and emotional readiness
- Prepared for recovery — time off, activity restrictions, help at home

FACTORS THAT ARGUE FOR WAITING

- Active smoking or nicotine use in any form
- Uncontrolled diabetes (elevated A1c) or other unstable medical conditions
- Significant distance from goal weight for body contouring procedures
- Recent major life change — divorce, loss, major transition
- Expectations that are unlikely to be met by surgery alone
- Motivation driven by another person's preference, not your own
- Unresolved body image concerns better addressed before surgery

WHY EACH FACTOR MATTERS

Smoking & Nicotine

Nicotine causes vasoconstriction — narrowing the blood vessels that supply the skin with oxygen during healing. Wound breakdown, skin loss, and poor scar outcomes are significantly more common in smokers. Complete cessation of all nicotine — including patches, gum, and vaping — is required at least 6 weeks before surgery. This applies to all procedures involving significant skin handling.

Diabetes

Elevated blood sugar impairs wound healing and increases infection risk. Well-controlled diabetes with a normal A1c is generally manageable with careful perioperative planning. Uncontrolled diabetes is a reason to postpone until better control is achieved. Disclose your diabetes and your current A1c at your consultation.

Weight

For body contouring procedures, weight loss after surgery changes the result — sometimes significantly. Being at or near a stable goal weight before operating ensures the surgical result reflects the body you intend to maintain. Patients significantly above goal weight are counseled to reach it first. 10–15 lbs is a reasonable threshold; more than that warrants waiting.

Expectations

Cosmetic surgery improves anatomy — it does not transform identity. Results take time: swelling resolves over weeks to months, scars mature over a year. Surgery does not stop aging. A patient whose expectations are calibrated to what surgery can realistically achieve will be satisfied. One whose expectations exceed that threshold will not be — regardless of technical outcome.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR SURGEON

Bring this list to your consultation. Check off the ones you've discussed.

ABOUT YOUR CANDIDACY

- ☐ Based on my health history, am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- ☐ Are there factors in my history that increase my surgical risk?
- ☐ Is my weight appropriate for the procedure I'm considering?
- ☐ What would you recommend I do before surgery to optimize my result?

ABOUT THE PROCEDURE & RECOVERY

- ☐ What does a realistic result look like for someone with my anatomy?
- ☐ How long will it take to see the final result?
- ☐ What are the activity restrictions during recovery?
- ☐ What complications should I watch for and when should I call?

ASK YOURSELF — HONESTLY

- ☐ Have I wanted this for a sustained period, or is this recent and reactive?
- ☐ Am I doing this for myself, or to meet someone else's expectation?
- ☐ Is my weight stable and at goal for body procedures?
- ☐ Have I stopped all nicotine and can I stay smoke-free through recovery?

ABOUT NEXT STEPS

- ☐ What is the timeline from consultation to surgery?
- ☐ What pre-operative steps do I need to complete?
- ☐ Are there lifestyle changes I should make before surgery?
- ☐ What would you recommend for a patient in my situation — and why?

MY QUESTIONS & NOTES

Write your own questions and notes below. Bring this page to your appointment.

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