

Cosmetic Surgery on the Rise: The Impact of Remote Communication

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Abstract : Aims: The recent increase in remote video interaction has increased the number of requests for teleconsultations with plastic surgeons in private practice (70% in the UK and 64% in the USA). This study investigated the motivations for such an increase and the underlying psychological impact on patients. Method: An anonymous web-based poll of 8 questions was designed and distributed to patients seeking cosmetic surgery through social networks in both Italy and the UK. The questions gathered responses regarding 1. Reasons for pursuing cosmetic surgery; 2. The effects of delays caused by the SARS-COV-2 pandemic; 3. The effects on mood; 4. The influence of video conferencing on body-image perception. Results: 85 respondents completed the online poll. Overall, 68% of respondents stated that seeing themselves more frequently online had influenced their decision to seek cosmetic surgery. The types of surgeries indicated were predominantly to the upper body and face (82%). Delays and access to surgeons during the pandemic were perceived as negatively impacting patients' moods (95%). Body-image perception and self-esteem were lower than in the pre-pandemic, particularly during lockdown (72%). Patients were more inclined to undergo cosmetic surgery during the pandemic, both due to the wish to improve their "lockdown face" for video conferencing (77%) and also due to the benefits of home recovery while in smart working (58%). Conclusions: Overall, findings suggest that video conferencing has led to a significant increase in requests for cosmetic surgery and the so-called "Zoom Boom" effect.

Keywords : cosmetic surgery, remote communication, telehealth, zoom boom

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