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## Surgery News

### Surgery is Safe

*While the public is reeling from news of the tragic death of rapper Kanye West's mother, Dr. Donda West, the country's top plastic surgeons are reacting by educating the public with guidelines for safe surgery and information about the real "risk" of cosmetic procedures--under-qualified practitioners.*

Bakersfield, CA (PRWEB) November 23, 2007 -- The fallout from the recent death of rapper Kanye West's mother, Dr. Donda West, is causing a far-reaching backlash against cosmetic surgery. As early investigations attribute the tragedy to "complications from a cosmetic surgical procedure," initial public reaction is to avoid cosmetic procedures all together, deeming them "too risky."

However, qualified plastic and reconstructive surgeons are speaking out in an effort to educate the public about the real risk of plastic surgery. According to Dr. Darshan Shah, a Mayo Clinic-trained Board Certified Surgeon, clinical educator in plastic surgery, and three-time winner of the prestigious "Best in Bakersfield" award for cosmetic procedures, "Cosmetic surgery itself actually carries very minimal risk if you put yourself in the hands of a qualified, certified, cosmetic surgery specialist--someone who has trained and devoted their career to the field of plastic and reconstructive surgery . . . the real risk lies not in the surgery itself, but in the misrepresentation and inexperience of certain surgeons."

Dr. Shah advises would-be patients that, "The most important thing is research. It is crucial that patients do their own research prior to even consulting with a surgeon." And while Dr. Shah himself has appeared on shows such as Dr. Phil and Extreme Makeover, he stresses that the public can not trust the media to research a doctor's qualifications: It has been uncovered that Dr. Jan Adams (the doctor involved in the Donda West incident) had been a frequent guest on The Oprah Winfrey Show as well as involved in his own makeover program, yet, in fact, is not board eligible or certified in

plastic surgery, and, according to the website for the California Medical Board, has been sued numerous times for medical malpractice. "By no means does a TV appearance signify that a doctor is a qualified cosmetic surgeon . . . anyone considering plastic surgery must do their own research into a surgeon's history and medical qualifications," warns Dr. Shah.

But researching the doctor's training is not the only protective measure: In an effort to educate the public, Dr. Shah shares his list of potentially lifesaving guidelines for safe cosmetic surgery:

#### 1. Thoroughly investigate training and credentials

Again, don't trust TV personalities to verify credentials: Visit websites like Medical Board of California (or [www.medbd.com.ca.gov/lookup](http://www.medbd.com.ca.gov/lookup) in California), the American Board of Plastic Surgery ([www.abplsurg.com](http://www.abplsurg.com)), or the American College of Surgeons ([www.facs.org](http://www.facs.org)). Make sure the doctor has specifically been trained in the field of Plastic Surgery, too often we find anesthesiologists, ob/gyn's or even family practice doctor performing surgery which they are not qualified to do.

#### 2. Search for malpractice claims

One of the best indicators of incompetence is malpractice claims or settlements. Chances are good that if a surgeon is practicing in an unethical manner, someone has complained--the Federation of State Medical Boards ([www.fsmb.org](http://www.fsmb.org)) is a good resource for tracking disciplinary actions. Finally, do a quick Google or Yahoo search on both the name of the surgeon as well as the surgery center itself and see what comes up; check for any negative reports associated with either name.

#### 3. Meet the (wo)man

While some may argue that you don't need to click on a personal level to have a safe surgical experience (and in fact Dr. Adams himself appears quite charming), feeling comfortable with your doctor is actually an important consideration: If you feel at ease, you are more likely to address your fears and ask the questions that will paint the fullest picture of the doctor's competencies. Furthermore, there are certain red flags to look for such as a doctor who seems to be persuading you to have a surgery or who actively pushes additional procedures. When meeting a potential surgeon, the vibe you should be getting from him is one of caution, no matter what the procedure.

#### 4. A medical exam is a must

Any qualified surgeon will require all patients over 50, or any patients with medical problems, to undergo a full medical evaluation prior to surgery . . . and will review the results personally. If your doctor discredits the need for a full workup or simply takes your word that you are "in good health," you

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need to find another doctor. And disappointing as it may be, if the results of your exam indicate you are not a good candidate for cosmetic surgery, heed the warning--"doctor shopping" until you find a surgeon who'll agree to perform the procedure is one of the most common causes of disaster.

#### 5. Follow the doctor's orders

There are good reasons doctors give instructions prior to surgery; ignore them and you may be putting your life in peril. Whether it's quitting smoking or avoiding alcohol or aspirin, when it comes to pre-operative orders, caution is king.

#### 6. Be honest with your surgeon

This should go without saying, but it is extremely risky to withhold information about your medical history in an effort to get your doctor to approve a surgery. Even if you think it's irrelevant, be sure to disclose all medical conditions (past or present), prior surgeries, and medications or drug use--your doctor is bound by the laws of confidentiality, so disclose to avoid danger.

#### 7. Be honest with yourself

While this is not so much a matter of safety as it is psychological health, the best way to assure a positive outcome is to be honest with yourself (and your doctor) regarding your expectations. Cosmetic surgery is not to be taken lightly; make sure you identify the reasons you desire a procedure, what you feel will change as a result, and that your goals regarding the surgery are realistic. For example, liposuction or breast enhancement may boost your confidence at the beach, but they will not address underlying depression or solve interpersonal issues.

To speak to Dr. Shah or a member of his team, or to schedule a free consultation to discuss whether cosmetic surgery is a viable option for you, call (661) 327-3800 or visit [www.drshah.com](http://www.drshah.com) for a preliminary virtual consultation.

Dr. Darshan Shah, MD, FACS, is one of the industry's most renowned plastic and reconstructive surgeons. With offices in Bakersfield and Beverly Hills, California, he specializes in tummy tucks, breast augmentation, breast lifts, liposuction, facelifts, eyelid surgery, and rhinoplasty. Dr. Shah's credentials include Board Certification by the American College of Surgeons (FACS), and specialized training in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the prestigious Mayo Clinic. His extensive training, combined with the experience of over 8000 surgical procedures, has earned him the "Best in Bakersfield" title in 2005, 2006, and 2007. At the Kern Medical Center--University of California, San Diego, his work in breast cancer surgery earned him the Helfert award, given only to the most outstanding surgical chief resident; he is currently ranked among the top 10 breast augmentation surgeons statewide.

In addition to serving as Medical Director at Beautologie by

Dr. Shah, where he oversees a team of three esteemed plastic surgeons and anti-aging specialists, Dr. Shah actively volunteers in the community and lectures around the country on cosmetic surgery and breast reconstruction; he is a clinical educator and popular mentor for surgical residents and continues his own education by attending nearly every major plastic surgery conference in the country. His work has earned him widespread media attention in magazines and newspapers.

For more information on Beautologie by Dr. Shah, and to view a complete list of the training and credentials of Dr. Shah and his associates, please visit [www.drshah.com/aboutthedoctors.html](http://www.drshah.com/aboutthedoctors.html).

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### Contact Information

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