



Black Market Plastic Surgery: The Price You Pay for a "Bargain"



Seeking fuller lips, a larger derriere and bigger breasts, but unable to afford expensive plastic surgery procedures?

Many women in the U.S. are increasingly turning to the black market to alter their appearance. With the use of tools such as industrial silicone, which is only available at home improvement stores, many women in several states have died after people without medical training injected their buttocks with the silicone.

Of those who survive the procedure, many are left with disfigured appearances and serious medical issues. To discuss the new trends of "black market" cosmetic procedures and the dangers of them we turned to expert **Dr. Stanley Poulos**, a board-certified plastic surgeon in the San Francisco area.

The Rise of "Pump-Up Parties"

Especially notorious are "pump-up parties," where people, often members of the male-to-female transgender community, gather for liquid silicone injections in hopes of feminizing their appearance. According to a study reported at the 2006 meeting of the Radiological Society of North America, 11 women or transsexuals suffered silicone pulmonary embolism and died after getting liquid silicone injections. The study included 44 people over a 15-year period. Unfortunately, since this is an illegal practice, it's very difficult to know how widespread or what the numbers are.

Dr. Poulos states, "Pumping is becoming more and more common for those who cannot afford to go to a qualified plastic surgeon. The people who usually do the pumping are not doctors or nurses (they are neither licensed nor board certified), and they offer cosmetic services very cheap. The silicone that they are injecting could be medical-grade, or industrial-grade, and you can't really be sure what impurities it may have."

Deadly complications from these procedures, and severe infections causing chronic health problems are documented yet people still put themselves at serious risk to save money.

"While everything may look and feel great right after 'pumping,' problems can occur months or even years later. The silicone can migrate to other parts in your body, then harden and cause chronic pain. It can also cause a multitude of other health problems and be disfiguring as well," Poulos adds.

How Legitimate Plastic Surgeons Perform a Buttock Enhancement

The surgery is actually a transplant of a patient's own adipose (fat) tissue from one area of the body to the butt. Liposuction is used to remove excess fat from abdomen, flanks, back or thighs which is then prepared to allow injection into the buttock region to optimize body contour. Sculpting the soft tissues immediately surrounding the buttock defines the added fullness of the transplantation.

"When it comes to your body you really do not want to take chances and since there is a specific way to administer the procedure to achieve an optimal result you really want to be armed with information about the right and wrong way a procedure is done," advises Poulos.

High Death and Disfigurement Rate with Black Market Plastic Surgery

Dr. Poulos says, "Complications can occur even in optimal conditions, of course; but the individuals responsible for these and other deaths were subject to zero regulations and were operating in ill-equipped condominium basements, apartments, and private homes, with no safety backups or trained staff on hand to help if anything went wrong."

Tips for Those Who Desire Plastic Surgery

"If you're planning to undergo a cosmetic procedure, don't let yourself be taken in by discount costs and false promises. Any procedure you have done should be performed by a board-certified plastic surgeon in a safe, accredited facility. Ask about potential risks, and don't take any shortcuts. Your life is too important to risk over a lower price tag," stresses Poulos.

For those patients who can't afford to pay for surgery outright, financing options do exist with some plastic surgery practices. Using financing options to proceed with board certified plastic surgeons can save your face and body, if not your life.



Stanley Poulos, MD

Dr. Stanley Poulos specializes in cosmetic breast surgery and body contouring procedures. He helped pioneer the quick lift facial rejuvenation surgery in California and is recognized as one of the leading plastic surgeons in Marin County and the entire San Francisco Bay area.

Dr. Poulos and Plastic Surgery Specialists have extensive experience in body contour procedures. A graduate of the University of Texas Medical School, Dr. Poulos completed his internship and residency at UC San Francisco. He completed a plastic surgery fellowship at St. Francis Hospital in San Francisco and is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. www.psspecialists.com

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