

### Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

It is generally believed that looking attractive provides us a shortcut to success. Imagine the situation that two applicants with nearly the same ability are applying for a job at the same time, if you were the boss, you would prefer hiring the one with a more appealing looking, wouldn't you? Obviously, with an attractive appearance, we can get more benefits than an ordinary looking person. All of us want to look attractive but at the same time, we know that it is impossible for us to decide how we look in the future when we are growing up. However, thanks to the advancements in technology, we can change our look by plastic surgery, meaning that we are having the chance to improve our appearance. It is believed that this is the major reason that why plastic surgery is now a multi-million-dollar industry.

As expected, not everyone agrees that it is worth undergoing this kind of surgery. Although some of us support cosmetic surgery because of the benefits it can possibly bring to us, others, including me, believe that the potential dangers of having plastic surgery are far more significant than what we can gain. At the same time the supporters disagree with our worries since they choose to trust the advancements in technology and believed that they can minimize the possibility of surgical failure. Knowing this, however, I still express my distrust of cosmetic surgery due to numerous reasons. Besides, I believe that undergoing plastic surgery can be costly.

In fact, our worries are based on evidence. Model Solange Magnano died in hospital after being transferred from a clinic where she underwent an elective surgery on her buttocks. The discovery of the fact that PAAG, a chemical which is commonly injected to customers' body during breast augmentation, is a carcinogen, has forced many people to receive another operation to extract this harmful substance from their body. According to National Mortality Rates after Outpatient Cosmetic Surgery, a survey conducted in 2018, 42 deaths were reported while undergoing the retrieval surgery. The data prove that undergoing plastic surgery is still risky at present. This explains why I distrust such surgery. Actually, this also shows that the laws are not strict enough. Some people even ignore the potential danger of plastic surgery, treating it the same as other normal beauty treatments. This has pampered the industry for not paying much attention to the risk of plastic surgery.

As I mentioned, the costly treatment is also a reason why I do not support plastic surgery. The cost of each treatment is counted in tens of thousands. This is not a small amount for sure. If you experience surgical failure unluckily, you will spend even more since you want to correct it. Pete Burns, a musician, had undergone about 300 times of plastic surgery, since he had never satisfied with the results after the surgery. He went bankrupt at last.

It is clear that plastic surgery is not worth trying. However, many people are still not aware of it. Therefore, the government should put more effort into telling the public about the potential problems

brought by cosmetic surgery by making TV advertisements, creating posters, etc. Education on the harmful effects of the dangerous surgery and the correct values should also be promoted. In addition, although the laws are already set to restrict ordinary people without relevant professional medical practising certificate from performing risky plastic surgery, definitions of some wordings are not clear enough. To correct it, I suggest that government should set up a working group to reinvestigate the laws that help regulate the industry. Besides, it is believed that people should fully understand the risks of undergoing plastic surgery before making decisions. If they decide to do so, they should do research like checking whether they are visiting a healthcare facility with positive reputation. Nigel Mercer, the president of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, advises against flying to another country for plastic surgery. Long flights can increase the risk of DVT, and the risk of bleeding is high. Think twice before making such an important decision to go under knife.

Yours truly,

Vincent Tong