



Position Statement
on
The Definitions of Cosmetic and Reconstructive Surgery
(Approved by the Board of Directors May 13, 1995)
(Amended by the Board of Directors August 7, 2010)

The American Academy of Dermatology supports the American Medical Association's definitions of "cosmetic" and "reconstructive" surgery, which read as follows:

H-475.992 Definitions of "Cosmetic" and "Reconstructive" Surgery

(1) The AMA supports the following definitions of "cosmetic" and "reconstructive" surgery: Cosmetic surgery is performed to reshape normal structure of the body in order to improve the patient's appearance and self-esteem. Reconstructive surgery is performed on abnormal structures of the body, caused by congenital; defects development abnormalities, trauma, infection, tumors or disease. It is generally performed to improve function, but may also be done to approximate a normal appearance.

(2) The AMA encourages third-party payers to use these definitions in determining services eligible for coverage under the plans they offer or administer. (CMS Rep. F, A-89; Reaffirmed: Sunset Report, A-00; Reaffirmed, A-03)