

Letter to the Editor – *Refinery29*

June 26, 2018

Dear Editor,

The American Society for Dermatologic Surgery (ASDS) applauds the message in your recent article, "[The Women Who Want to Look Instagram Filtered IRL](#)" for recognizing that the popularity of a provider doesn't equate to medical credentials or the quality of care a patient will receive. There are true risks of complications that can result in serious adverse effects when procedures are administered by practitioners without appropriate training and expertise.

However, I would like to clarify an error in this piece. The article states, "To register as a dermatologist...a doctor must finish medical school and one year of hands-on residency in dermatology." This is not accurate. Most dermatology residency programs take three years to complete, some longer, and many continue their education with more specialized training in a fellowship program. All board-certified dermatologists have a minimum of 12 years of medical training on a variety of treatment options to address skin health and beauty concerns. In addition, dermatologists have 12,000-16,000 patient care hours that include diagnosis, patient counseling, administering medications and performing procedures. Because of this specialized training, ASDS members possess the understanding of facial anatomy and the aging process and are able to offer patients a variety of treatments to support overall skin health. Often patients might come to us asking for a treatment they heard about, but through our medically-trained expertise, we can guide them to other options that may provide a better outcome or result for their particular need.

Taking a deeper dive into the data, the 2017 ASDS Survey on Dermatologic Procedures revealed that ASDS members performed more than eight million cosmetic procedures, including over 3.7 million injectable procedures. Furthermore, *Dermatologic Surgery* published a first-of-its-kind study indicating that dermatologists are the leading pioneers in 12 of 18 categories including wrinkle-relaxers, fillers, laser hair removal, laser rejuvenation, body sculpting and more. These stats reinforce ASDS member dermatologists as the leading skin experts for cosmetic medical treatments with the ability to optimize natural, high-quality outcomes using a full-face aesthetic acumen.

Celebrities and social feeds will continue to promote cosmetic procedures and popular providers, but our mission is to educate consumers that credentials and medical training matter. In the interest of patient care and safety, please share with your readers that more information and a referral service to board-certified dermatologists can be found at asds.net.



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