

How to Use the ISAPS Code of Ethics in Your Marketing to Attract New Patients

You already follow the world's highest level of professional and ethical standards in plastic surgery. You want your patients to know this — but how? Simply cutting and pasting the [ISAPS Code of Ethics](#) onto your website, or into brochures and advertisements probably won't be very persuasive. After all, anyone can claim to be "the best." How do you prove it?

There's an old saying: "Show, don't tell." Your membership in ISAPS is a one of your best professional assets, and there are many ways you can demonstrate this in the materials you share with patients:

- Include a brief explanation of how you continually strive to improve your own medical skills; share links to ISAPS [courses and symposia](#) you attend. Also, make links available to your own medical [research and publications](#) for the benefit of patients and colleagues.
- All ISAPS surgeons must balance professionalism and courtesy with their obligation to inform patients (and the public) of ineffective, dangerous or fraudulent plastic surgery practices. This can sometimes mean walking a fine line between voicing legitimate concerns and violating laws governing libel and slander. It is much safer not to name specific individuals or practices, unless your concerns are grave enough to report to the governing body that regulates plastic surgery in your country. Your patients should know that you do this only when necessary, but you WILL do it.
- Focus on the positive. Emphasize your own credentials and adherence to best practices (though not, of course, to the extent of "self-aggrandizing.") Provide information that teaches patients what to look for (and what to avoid) in plastic surgeons. Encourage patients to [use the ISAPS website](#) as a starting point to find out more information about any surgeon they are considering.
- If the laws of your country permit, you can present proof of your patients' satisfaction in the form of surveys, reviews, testimonies, before-and-after photos and so on. Don't claim a 100% success rate. No one has a 100% patient satisfaction rate, and anyone who says otherwise may not be trustworthy. You can also report accurate estimates of how often your facility is inspected, how often patients seek revision surgery, etc. If possible, provide additional information on the plastic surgeons with whom you consult regularly.
- The ISAPS Code of Ethics prohibits its members from actively soliciting patients or "pushing" them to have unnecessary treatments. This includes dispensing drugs only when in the patient's best interests. If your practice sells any supplemental products, these should be displayed prominently for purchase and a member of your staff designated to handle any questions, but not charged with the specific task of "selling."
- Briefly explain the reasons for your price level. Patients find it reassuring to know that you aren't advertising the cheapest price, but that all fees will be fair and just and commensurate with services rendered. Top-grade equipment and materials, trained staff and a clean, safe facility all cost money. Prices below the "too good to be true" point should be avoided.
- Share photos, press releases and other documentation of your ISAPS participation in activities dedicated to improving the health and well-being of individual patients, such as [Surgical Relief Teams](#) or serving [public education](#).
- Always provide clear and up-to-date information about outside agencies where patients may report irregularities or concerns that they may not be comfortable sharing directly.