



**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)*

*This Position Statement is provided for educational and informational purposes only. It is intended to offer physicians guiding principles and policies regarding the practice of dermatology. This Position Statement is not intended to establish a legal or medical standard of care. Physicians should use their personal and professional judgment in interpreting these guidelines and applying them to the particular circumstances of their individual practice arrangements.*