

NEW RESEARCH REVEALS COSMETIC SURGERY IS BOOMING IN UAE

Enquiries to cosmetic surgery clinics more than double (106%) in the past year

- **Medical tourism to the UAE has increased by 135% in the past year.**
- **Top ten cosmetic surgery procedures in the UAE revealed**
- **Liposuction is the most popular treatment, with a 154% increase in enquiries in past year**
- **Nose job enquiries up 104% in 2015 and costs 23,885dh on average**
- **Enquiries for breast implants and breast lifts up 87% and 125% respectively over the past year with average price tags of 26,515dh and 34,678dh**
- **Facelift is becoming more popular and is on track to be in Top Ten procedures in 2016**
- **A quarter of all cosmetic surgery enquiries are from overseas patients**
- **Top overseas countries sending enquiries to UAE include Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman**

United Arab Emirates – 8th December, 2015: Cosmetic surgery has seen a surge in growth this year across the United Arab Emirates, with enquiries for elective cosmetic procedures increasing by 106%, according to private healthcare search engine WhatClinic.com. The stats were published as part of its analysis of cosmetic surgery trends in the Emirates over the year. The report also listed the top ten most popular treatments this year, with liposuction topping the list.

The surge in interest noted can be attributed to interest from patients both at home and abroad. With its range of private hospitals and a growing reputation for quality, the UAE is a top destination for elective healthcare globally. Medical tourism makes up a significant portion of the market, and overseas enquiries rose by 135% over the past 12 months.

The treatment costs an average of 20,981dh, and is not only the most popular treatment of the past year, it shows no sign of slowing down, with a 154% increase in patient enquiries to clinics in the region for the same period. Rhinoplasty was the second most popular treatment, and it too is increasing in popularity, up 104%. The average price tag of this surgery was revealed to be 23,885dh.

Third on the list is a relatively new procedure called gynecomastia, or male breast reduction. This procedure costs 21,296dh on average and is becoming more popular over time. Other breast related surgeries also made the list. Breast implants (the 4th most popular treatment) and breast lift (9th most popular) both showed increased interest from patients.

The first is used to increase the size of the breast, while the latter is more common among slightly older patients, who are hoping to restore a more youthful outline. Breast lift increased by 125% despite having an average price tag of 34,678dh. Implants grew by 87% and had an average price of 26,515dh.

5th on the list were tummy tucks - a bariatric treatment to remove excess flesh on the abdomen - a common surgery for those who have lost a significant amount of weight. The average price for this surgical procedure is 33,889dh and has increased by 153% this year.

Fat transfer also known as fat grafting or fat injection, is one of the newer treatments generating interest among cosmetic surgery patients. Enquiries are up 169%, and the treatment has an average cost of 21,850dh. Fat transfer is really a two-part treatment, that begins with liposuction to harvest donor fat from one area of the patient's body, to be 'replanted' in other areas, such as the face, hands, breasts or buttocks. The patient's own fat is considered more natural than fillers. Skill is needed to ensure the fat transferred grows in the new area, and a small proportion of the transferred fat can be reabsorbed into the body, so several treatments may be needed to create the desired effect.

Another treatment that has become recently popular is laser vaginal rejuvenation. Enquiries rose 215% over the past year, with the procedure costing 21,167dh on average.

Demand for eyelid surgery – the procedure to correct droopy eyelids by removing excess skin, muscle or fat – has seen a considerable surge in interest over the past year as enquiries are up by 245%. This procedure costs an average of 15,895dh.

Rounding off the top ten, buttock implants have also risen in popularity with a 97% increase in enquiries in the past year with an average price of 39,500dh.

Although not featured on this year's list, facelifts have been rising in popularity over the past 12 months and are likely to make the top ten in 2016. Enquiries have risen by 346% since 2014, and patients can expect to pay 30,833dh, on average.

Top ten most popular cosmetic surgery procedures in the UAE in 2015 based on enquiries to private clinics listed on WhatClinic.com		
Procedure	Increase in enquiries from last year	Average starting price (in Dirham)
Liposuction	154%	20,981dh
Rhinoplasty	104%	23,885dh
Gynecomastia	70%	21,296dh
Breast Implants	87%	26,515dh
Tummy Tuck	153%	33,889dh
Fat Transfer	169%	21,850dh
Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation	215%	21,167dh
Eyelid surgery	245%	15,895dh
Breast Lift	125%	34,678dh
Butt Implants	97%	39,500dh

A quarter (25%) of all cosmetic surgery enquiries were from overseas patients. Over the past twelve months, enquiries from Saudi Arabia have increased by 308%, Oman enquiries are up 188% and enquiries from Qatar have increased by 51%. Further away, enquiries from UK patients have seen a 295% rise in the past year.

Commenting on this trend, **Wima Akl, Surgical Services Coordinator at American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery Hospital, Dubai**, said: *“Over the past two years we have seen a significant increase in cosmetic surgery patients at AACSH. Patients are coming to Dubai from all over the Emirates, but also from other countries such as those in the GCC. The main reason is we have a lot of international experts here, including surgeons who are American board certified, so people don’t need to go to the US. It’s easier and cheaper for patients to come to Dubai and they have access to the same level of care and expertise here.*

“Another reason for this boom is the increased access to choice and information online. Generally speaking, Internet and social media have played a huge role in the rise of this industry, and people are more comfortable talking about cosmetic surgery now. Newest technologies and techniques are also making the procedures safer, with less risks and shorter recovery times.”

Emily Ross, Director of WhatClinic.com, said: *“Our data shows that cosmetic surgery is most definitely a growing market. The UAE has positioned itself as a centre of excellence for private healthcare and this investment has clearly paid off. A quarter of all enquiries are from overseas patients and this figure continues to grow, showing that the UAE is becoming a top global destination for elective procedures, and a very real alternative to US travel for patients in a number of key markets.*

“We encourage all patients to do their research before they travel for any kind of procedure. Speak to a number of specialists until you find one that you are comfortable with. If you do decide to go overseas, be realistic about recovery time and getting home, and make sure you are informed about possible risks and insurance requirements”

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Notes to editor:

*This data is based on actual patient enquiries made by email to UAE private clinics listed on WhatClinic.com, during the time range 01.11.2014 to 01.11.2015, compared to the period 01.11.2013 to 01.11.2014.

About WhatClinic.com:

WhatClinic.com is a global healthcare search engine that enables patients to find, compare and book private clinics across the globe, with unique features such as online booking and independent price checks. With detailed listings for over 120,000 private healthcare clinics across 135 countries worldwide, WhatClinic.com helps consumers make informed decisions about the treatments they want. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King and is headquartered in Ireland. Since its launch, over 60 million people have visited the site to find, compare and book private clinics across a wide range of elective medical treatment.