

U.S. May Compete Against Costa Rica in Plastic Surgery Vacations

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NEW BERN, NC (PRWEB) NOVEMBER 26, 2015 – “For decades, Americans have traveled from one city to another to receive specialized medical treatments or to see a specialist for a rare condition,” says Dr. John Zannis, a board-certified plastic surgeon who practices in New Bern, North Carolina. “More recently, consumers have learned that they can have medical procedures done in another country for less cost.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as many as 750,000 residents of the United States have elective surgery of all types done abroad each year (<http://www.cdc.gov/features/medicaltourism/>). “In the majority of cases, this is not because they receive a higher quality of care, but because the [cost of the procedure is dramatically lower](#). Traveling to another country for medical care is not without its risks, however. In fact, it can be much riskier than having the same procedure in the United States. Now, with the introduction of domestic medical tourism for plastic surgery, patients can pair the advantages of receiving top quality, safe treatments and procedures with the lower cost of all-inclusive trips,” says Dr. Zannis.

“I found that patients were coming to see me from all over the country because they could have an experienced, board-certified plastic surgeon do their procedure for considerably less than what doctors in their demographic area were asking,” says Dr. Zannis. “This began what I call ‘domestic medical tourism’: patients traveling for affordable plastic surgery, but with quality, American-trained surgeons in the US. Because the cost of living in eastern North Carolina is low, and because we do a high volume of surgery, we are able to offer procedures to patients who would otherwise not have access to them.” The city of New Bern is about 112 miles east of Raleigh, NC and is known for its historic districts and as the birthplace of Pepsi Cola.

“The most important thing a person can do when considering medical tourism is to thoroughly investigate the qualifications of their doctors and surgeons, as well as check the accrediting body of the hospital or clinic,” says Dr. Zannis. “The credentials required for performing plastic surgery vary widely around the world, and the only way to ensure quality care is to look into the standards required in that country. This can often be difficult for those from the United States, but it is paramount if they want to avoid some of the pitfalls of traveling abroad for a procedure.”

Some of the potentially deadly problems that may be encountered overseas include:

- Doctors who reuse needles and surgical tools without proper sterilization procedures
- Poor quality or even counterfeit medication, including those used for anesthesia
- An unscreened blood supply
- A higher risk of antibiotic resistant infections

“Another risk of foreign medical tourism is the language barrier that may exist,” says Dr. Zannis. “Communication issues with healthcare providers can lead to misunderstandings. Other things that may need to be considered include how soon the patient can fly after surgery, and whether there is any legal recourse if something goes wrong during or after a procedure.”

“While the U.S. is one of the most popular destinations for international medical tourists, Americans have been more likely to travel to India, Mexico, Brazil or [Costa Rica in search of lower costs](#),” says Dr. Zannis. “U.S. plastic surgeons see the risks they are undertaking, however, and some are beginning to offer their own medical tourism

packages within the United States, giving patients the option to travel across the country and receive a high standard of care instead of traveling around the world and receiving questionable care.”

“Bargain shopping is the last thing you want to do when looking for a plastic surgeon, but safe, high-quality surgery at a good value is available in this country, “ says Dr. Zannis. “Patients don’t need to take the risks involved with traveling abroad for plastic surgery.”

About Dr. John Zannis:

Dr. Zannis is board certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and studied Human Biology and Studio Art at Stanford University prior to entering Medical School. He obtained his Doctor of Medicine degree (M.D.) from the University of Cincinnati College Of Medicine.

After medical school, Dr. Zannis received his formal training in General Surgery and Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina under the guidance of world-renowned plastic surgeon Dr. Louis Argenta.