

Letter to the Editor

TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF HISTORY IN TRAINING IN AESTHETIC MEDICINE FOR GRADUATES IN MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY

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To the Editor,

The face plays an important role in relationships. The nose, eyes, and lips are pivots of the aesthetics of the face (1). During aging, a ptosis of the facial fat of the face can occur with the inversion of the beauty triangle (2).

Noninvasive facial reshaping procedures have increased in recent years, such as dermal filler, cold plasma, peeling, non-ablative radiofrequency, biostimulating, and traction threads. Important progress has been made thanks to a better knowledge of anatomical structures and their physiology, which allows aesthetic doctors to perform treatments with a high aesthetic yield.

Despite of the great advances achieved to date, facial lifting remains the most complex surgical procedure among the plastic surgery treatments of choice. Moreover, as with every surgical procedure, it is accompanied by several disadvantages, including breathing disturbances, atrophy, scars and fibrosis of the skin and soft tissues, infections, and even postoperative deformities, depending on the surgeon and the circumstances of facial reshaping (3). For all these reasons, aesthetic medicine treatments are acquiring increasing importance within the cosmetic field, preferring noninvasive treatment. Training and continuing education are fundamental for practicing aesthetic medicine (4).

Unfortunately, in Italy, there are no courses of study during degree courses. Aesthetic doctors are trained in post-graduate courses, such as master's degrees, but there is a lack of specialization courses in aesthetic medicine. Since 2002, a reproducible introductory course on aesthetic medicine for dental and medical graduates was established at the University of Chieti, training 20 doctors per year. This course helps dental and medical graduates to apply aesthetic medicine techniques and provides valuable information on the specialty itself.

The course has become a valuable training and marketing tool for private practice. Medical and dental school in Italy lasts six years. It starts immediately after high school, with two years of theoretical and practical classes followed by a four-year internship that includes professionalizing subjects. At the end of the internship, the successful student receives a degree in dentistry and can practice dentistry. Young dentists may work in any dental field, such as general dentists or specialists such as oral surgeons, orthodontists, and pediatric dentists. In Italy, too, aesthetic medicine is not a recognized specialty, although craniomaxillofacial surgery, dermatology, and plastic surgery are considered major players in aesthetic medicine and surgery. Practicing aesthetic medicine in Italy without having a specialty and without certification of a post-graduate course, even if it is possible, risks not being covered by professional insurance. To obtain a master's degree at the University of Chieti-Pescara, one must have completed a one-year training course.

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The Master program covers topics such as aging and rejuvenation with non-invasive techniques. Initially, Italian dentists could only treat the lower third of the face(5), but starting in 2023, they will be able to perform minimally invasive treatments on the entire face. This has increased the interest of Italian dentists in aesthetic medicine.

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