



One of Our Greatest Problems... Lowballing

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One of the most serious problems in the field of hair restoration relates not to the quality of the work being done but to its quantity, i.e. the number of grafts that are eventually done. Too frequently doctors and patients alike take too optimistic a view of the amount of work that must be done based upon a patient's limited financial resources. This results in an outcome that fails to meet the patient's goals and leaves the patient with an unacceptable appearance. All of us need to be very cognizant of the issue of informed consent in this regard.

The problem has been exacerbated recently by at least one group with a national presence who regularly use a "lowball" sales technique when estimating the number of grafts needed in order to lure the patient into their practice. Once the work has begun, the estimate of the work needed increases as a regular policy. This type of behavior impacts negatively upon both the image and the work of ethical practitioners. It creates a body of patients who are dissatisfied either with the outcome of their appearance or with their economic outcome. These dissatisfied patients "bad mouth" the entire industry by word of mouth or indirectly by their obvious and unsatisfactory appearance. Intentional misrepresentation is a flagrant violation of the Hippocratic Oath. It is also a violation of the laws that govern our ability to practice medicine. I would ask the Forum readership for discussion and suggestions as to what can be done to control this type of pathologic behavior.

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