



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF COSMETIC SURGERY SOCIAL MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery, Inc. (“**AACS**”) recognizes the Internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information using a variety of Social Media platforms (“**Social Media**”). It is important to remember that the legal and ethical rules that apply to a physician’s conduct in the physical world also apply to a physician’s Internet conduct, including use of Social Media.

Minimally, AACS recommends this list of questions should be considered before posting on Social Media:

- Does the Social Media post violate applicable law?
- Does the Social Media post violate your legal or ethical obligations as a healthcare provider?
- Does the Social Media post violate a patient’s or any other individual’s privacy rights or your privacy obligations?
- Does the Social Media post violate your contractual obligations?
- Does the Social Media post violate the legal rights of any individual or entity, including trademark, copyright, patent, trade secret, and other intellectual property rights?
- Does the Social Media post violate policies, procedures, and/or rules to which you are subject, including those of an employer or as a medical staff member?
- Could the Social Media post create liability for you or for someone else?
- Does the Social Media post suggest you are speaking on behalf of another individual or entity, when you have not been authorized to speak on behalf of that individual or entity?
- Does the Social Media post contain false, misleading, defamatory, harassing, discriminatory, disrespectful, or unprofessional statements?
- Could the Social Media post reflect poorly on you, your practice, your employer, or your profession?

This is not an exhaustive list of questions to consider before posting to Social Media. However, answering “yes” to any of the above questions signifies the Social Media post should not be published.

It is also important to remember that once posted, almost nothing can be permanently deleted from the Internet, it is very unlikely the post will remain private or confidential, even if posted on a private forum, and the post will be available online for an unknown length of time.

For all these reasons, AACS urges its members to act lawfully and to be ethical, cautious, thoughtful, respectful, and responsible when using Social Media.