

# DATA POINTS

A re-emerging conversation has the volume turned to “high”—and the world is watching.



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**Recent FDA-held hearings have**, once again, restarted the conversation on breast implant safety, and this time, advocacy groups, plastic surgeons and implant manufacturers are *very* involved.

According to the Aesthetic Society (ASAPS), 329,914 patients received breast implants from board-certified plastic surgeons in the U.S. last year. Worldwide, that number grows to more than 1.5 million patients, according to the latest statistics from the International Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS). Reports also state that the vast majority of patients were happy they had the procedure and would undergo it again. There is, however, a small percentage of patients who have experienced a myriad of symptoms that may or may not be related to their implants.

Whether the combination of these varying symptoms constitutes a distinct disease, breast implant illness (BII) is currently scientifically unproven, but deserves thorough investigation in a valid scientific manner. Patients who have concerns should contact their plastic surgeon, who should be board-certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery or a member of ISAPS if they live outside of the United States. They are the best source for information and advice rather than the internet or social media.

In an attempt to obtain more valid data, The Aesthetic Society Educational Research Foundation (ASERF) and ASAPS are not only funding scientific studies about these issues, but also actively pursuing working on proprietary technological solutions to collect data that will clarify and provide answers to these complex problems. It is critical to have long-term data from evidence-based, statistically convincing studies in order to continue better educating fully trained, board-certified plastic surgeons and the public about these procedures. The goal has been, and should always be, patient safety.

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Internationally renowned aesthetic plastic surgeon and noted educator Robert Singer, MD of La Jolla, CA is a diplomate of the American Board of Plastic Surgery and has served as president and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the prestigious American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS), chairman of the Board of Trustees of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), president of the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities, and president of the Aesthetic Surgery Education and Research Foundation (ASERF).