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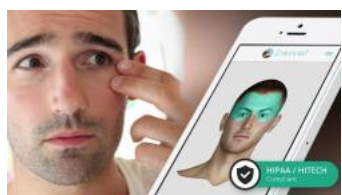
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## A Cosmetic Surgery Consult - From Your Phone

by Winnie McCroy  
EDGE Editor  
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Few people would buy a new car by rolling into the lot and pointing at what looks pretty. But many people who want to look younger or thinner do just that when searching for a cosmetic surgeon to render that tummy tuck or inject fillers into their face. Now, the new app **Zwivel** allows patients to plug in what they want done, and get digital consultations from five different certified plastic surgeons at once, who will tell them if their procedure is needed, then provide an estimate.

"It's not like Priceline.com for surgery; it's more like Match.com," explained Co-Founder and CEO Dr. Gary Breslow. "Cosmetic consultations can be like blind dating: a tremendous amount of time is wasted on consults that don't end up in procedures. Zwivel takes what happens in reality and facilitates it digitally."

The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery reports that cosmetic procedures for women have increased more than 471 percent since 1997. A large driver of that is non-invasive or minimally-invasive procedures like skin care, lasers, or Botox injectable fillers. But understanding that you can rejuvenate your face or body in non-invasive ways with minimal down time via numerous technologies can be overwhelming.

Breslow said 90 percent of plastic surgery patients are women, who take time off work or away from their family to go from doctor to doctor getting estimates and consults - 60 percent of which are never acted upon.



CEO Dr. Gary Breslow

### Click and Go

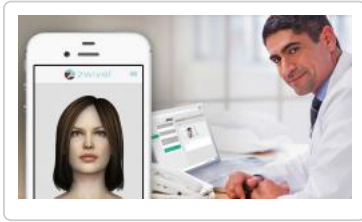
Now, instead of real-time comparison shopping, Zwivel allows patients to give a number of doctors the same information they would during an in-office consult in a private, HIPAA-compliant way, and get preliminary information and costs ahead of time. That way, when they visit their chosen doctor's office for the in-person consult, their chances of successfully receiving the right procedure are significantly higher.

Zwivel includes doctors from around the U.S., which is useful for those who prefer to get surgery in another state, perhaps to spend their month-long recuperation in mild climates like Arizona or California. But Breslow said the app isn't for medical tourism, where patients travel to the Dominican Republic or Central America for cut-rate plastic surgery. He has seen the complications from bargain basement procedures several times - when patients came to him with post-operative complications. With Zwivel, you can find a doctor within your

budget, without leaving the country.

As a New Jersey-based cosmetic surgeon, Breslow primarily sees patients from the New Jersey and New York metropolitan area. A prospective patient could search individual reviews of any number of doctors, and then book consultations with them. Even then, they may discover the doctor isn't the best choice for the specific procedure they want. And, as Breslow warns, you don't even have to be a plastic surgeon to do cosmetic procedures. But Zwivel makes sure that their providers are certified plastic surgeons.

"On Zwivel, you can see them sorted out by type, board certification, area of expertise, products and technologies in their offices, and reviews and rankings," said Breslow. "Then you send your information to that doctor or multiple doctors, and decide whether or not to move on to that in-office consult."



### How It Works

The app is easy to use, and you don't even need to provide your real name. Via an avatar, you select your 'areas of concern' via their HIPPA-compliant, secure encrypted server, and doctors will write back and let you know their initial thoughts. Depending on the procedure, doctors may ask for a photo of the user to provide a more accurate recommendation.

"Patients can upload videos, photos and basic medical information, and select up to five doctors to get opinions from," said Breslow. "They will give their recommended procedure or opinion, and an estimate. My patients can see my statistics and a video of my office team before they even come in for a full consultation. I tell them on Zwivel exactly what I would in my office, but instead of them taking off work, it takes a minute or two via the app."

In some cases, photos aren't even needed; for example, if a woman calls with 34DDD breasts and wants a reduction, Breslow knows what that surgery entails. But if someone is concerned about "looking old," the doctor would ask them to submit a photo to make an accurate assessment.

Photos can also help doctors determine exactly what the patient may need; for example, they may think they need liposuction all over, while the doctor might recommend a simple tummy tuck. And in some cases, doctors may just recommend weight loss.

"I've always viewed myself as a problem solver, and plastic surgery is just problem solving for the body. Any trained cosmetic doctor can tell within a reasonable certainty what they can do for you," said Breslow. "But it can't be confirmed without a live consult. Still, doctors are used to giving a range of estimates, and I can tell you from my own experience, the in-office quote comes within a close estimate of what's given."

In a nutshell, Zwivel is a way to eliminate the wasted time of initial in-office consults. Patients who use this app will know what procedure they need, who does it best, and how much it will cost by the time they get to the doctor's office.

The app is free for patients; doctors can upgrade to the paid Zwivel Premium to interact more with patients. In addition, the new Zwivel Match will allow doctors to search patients who have posted a request in their area of expertise, and interact with those patients directly.

"Zwivel is a no-brainer for patients and doctors," said Breslow. "The amount of time it has saved me and my patients has been remarkable. I know who they are, and if I can help them. And my patients also get to know me and my staff, thanks to videos where I talk to them and tell them what I'm thinking. It launched a year ago, but already doctors and patients really seem to like it."



Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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