

Introduction

Clinical photographs are useful for clinical records, surgical treatment planning, research, audit, education and in supporting medico-legal cases.⁽¹⁾ Since the internet is a resource most readily available to the general public, non-standardized online clinical images may potentially mislead unsuspecting readers.^(2,3)

Aim

This study assesses the photographic qualities of online clinical images.

Methods and Material

Clinical images were searched from the internet (www.google.com.my) with several keywords used in 6 possible combinations. The 6 different combinations are 'Pre and post blepharoplasty', 'Pre and post Botox', 'Pre and post cosmetic surgery', 'Before and after blepharoplasty', 'Before and after Botox' and "Before and after cosmetic surgery". All online images identified using the keyword combinations were downloaded in their highest resolution. All images were graded according to the Institute of Medical Illustrators (IMI) recommended photographic standards,^(4,5) by a qualified medical photographer (T Zoltie).

Results

A total of 1027 images were downloaded and assessed. 17.1% images fulfilled all the IMI criteria in pose, lighting, and standardisation. 98% of images were posed correctly. 79% of images were taken with flash photography but 54% of those images did not fulfil the recommended lighting techniques. 41% of images were inconsistent in the photographic method before and after the procedure.



Figure 1: Specimen Photos which Fulfil IMI criteria

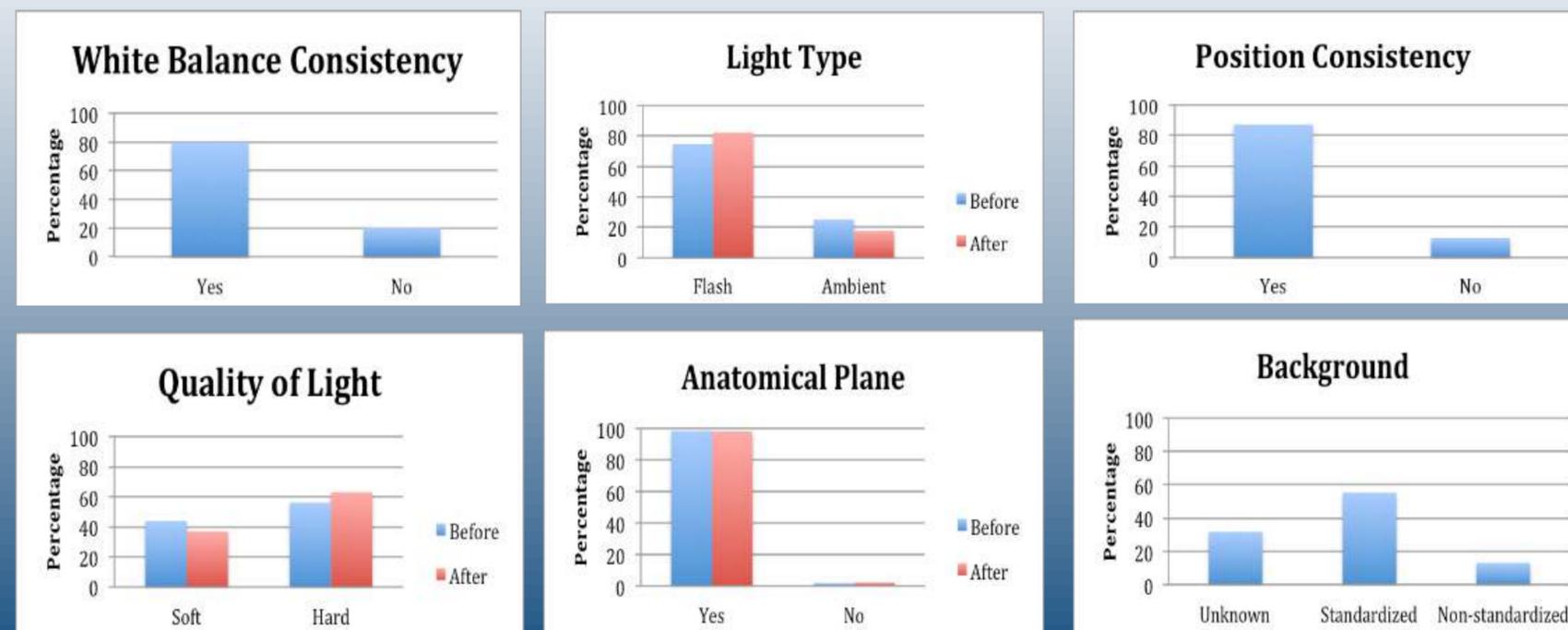


Chart 1 : Graphical representation of characteristics of photos

Conclusion

Online clinical photographs for aesthetic patients are generally taken with no photographic standardization. This may potentially mislead patients on the effectiveness of oculofacial cosmetic procedures.

References

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