Patients ‘risk blindness’

LEADING doctors are calling for an end to video-only consultations before fillers or Botox injections are applied at clinics in suburban shopping centres.

Two leading plastic surgeons said the legal Skype-only consultation practice was putting patients at risk.

Last year, regulators received 85 complaints about cosmetic treatments.

A Herald Sun investigation found beauty clinics at shopping centres including Chadstone and Fountain Gate offering patients brief Skype consultations with doctors, who then authorised nurses to inject the Schedule 4 drug.

Leading plastic surgeon Professor Mark Ashton has slammed the consultation-by-video practice and said patients risked blindness and other serious complications.

“The biggest problem with Skype consultations is that if something were to go wrong (in the procedure), that doctor is not physically present,” Prof Ashton said.

“We know things can go wrong with cosmetic injections, so patients are putting themselves at real unnecessary risk.”

If complications occurred, patients in shopping centres were unable to get the appropriate care such as they would in a clinic with a doctor present, Prof Ashton said.

And he warned of the “dangerous risks” when complications did occur.

“If it ends up in the eye, instantaneously the person goes blind and that blindness is permanent and irreparable.”

Age Reduxion Clinic plastic surgeon Dr Alix Ajam, who specialises in cosmetic procedures such as injectables, said he had seen complications in women who had gone to underqualified practitioners.

A woman, 21, of Mt Waverley, who asked not to be named but provided photos of the shoddy work she received at a Chadstone clinic, said her lips were left “disfigured” after a Botox lip-flip treatment that offered a slight pout to the top lip.

“They injected the Botox into the wrong places and my lips became so swollen — I was terrified that something had gone seriously wrong,” she said.

“I had to go elsewhere to get everything fixed as my lips were disfigured, but the whole experience was traumatising and I urge people to do their homework.”

SUZAN DELIBASIC