



# The Intersection of Star Culture in America and International Medical Tourism: Celebrity Treatment

*Kathy Merlock Jackson, Lisa Lyon Payne, Kathy Shepherd Stolley*

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Celebrity culture, health care, and travel attract attention in America's media-saturated society. These worlds curiously intersect in the study of medical tourism. Although the US touts some of the finest and best-known medical facilities in the world, many jet-setting A-list celebrities, who can well afford the finest of health care, seek treatment far away from home, popularizing international sites, physicians, and procedures. These travelers, whose every move is chronicled by the media, both reflect and influence health care concerns in America. An analysis of these high-profile cases of celebrities with both life-threatening and non life-threatening conditions sheds light on the link between medical tourism and celebrity, showing how health care and entertainment intersect, and the American public responds.

*The Intersection of Star Culture in America and International Medical Tourism: Celebrity Treatment* argues that celebrity cases and media content drive awareness of medical tourism among Americans at a time when the medical system is under intense scrutiny. By popularizing international sites for treatment, procedures not available in the US, and different approaches to patient care, media narratives present options for health care, triggering dialogue on one of America's most important human welfare issues.

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