

ABDOMINOPLASTY

Abdominoplasty, known more commonly as a "tummy tuck," is a major surgical procedure to remove excess skin and fat from the middle and lower abdomen and to tighten the muscles of the abdominal wall. The procedure can dramatically reduce the appearance of a protruding abdomen. But bear in mind, it does produce a permanent scar, which, depending on the extent of the original problem and the surgery required to correct it, can be quite long. However we try to place it in such way to be completely hidden by your underwear.

THE BEST CANDIDATES FOR ABDOMINOPLASTY

The best candidates for abdominoplasty are men or women who are in relatively good shape but are bothered by a large fat deposit or loose abdominal skin that won't respond to diet or exercise. The surgery is particularly helpful to women who, through multiple pregnancies, have stretched their abdominal muscles and skin beyond the point where they can return to normal. Loss of skin elasticity in older patients, which frequently occurs with slight obesity, can also be improved.

Patients who intend to lose a lot of weight should postpone the surgery. Also, women who plan future pregnancies should wait, as vertical muscles in the abdomen that are tightened during surgery can separate again during pregnancy. If you have scarring from previous abdominal surgery, your doctor may recommend against abdominoplasty or may caution you that scars could be unusually prominent.

Abdominoplasty can enhance your appearance and your self-confidence, but it won't necessarily change your looks to match your ideal, or cause other people to treat you differently. Before you decide to have surgery, think carefully about your expectations and discuss them with we.

ALL SURGERY CARRIES SOME UNCERTAINTY AND RISK

Thousands of abdominoplasties are performed successfully each year. Nevertheless, there are always risks associated with surgery and specific complications associated with this procedure.

Post-operative complications such as infection and blood clots are rare, but can occur. Infection can be treated with drainage and antibiotics, but will prolong your hospital stay. You can minimize the risk of blood clots by moving around as soon after the surgery as possible.

Poor healing, which results in conspicuous scars, may necessitate a second operation. Smokers should be advised to stop, as smoking may increase the risk of complications and delay healing.

You can reduce your risk of complications by closely following we's instructions before and after the surgery, especially with regard to when and how you should resume physical activity.

PLANNING YOUR SURGERY

If, for example, your fat deposits are limited to the area below the navel, you may require a less complex procedure called a partial abdominoplasty, also know as a mini-tummy tuck. You may, on the other hand, benefit more from partial or complete abdominoplasty done in conjunction with liposuction to remove fat deposits from the hips, for a better body contour. Or maybe liposuction alone would create the best result.

In any case, we will recommend you the procedure that is right for you and will come closest to producing the desired body contour.

PREPARING FOR YOUR SURGERY

We will give you specific instructions on how to prepare for surgery, including guidelines on eating and drinking, smoking, and taking or avoiding certain vitamins, and medications.

If you smoke, plan to quit at least one to two weeks before your surgery and not to resume for at least two weeks after your surgery. Avoid overexposure

to the sun before surgery, especially to your abdomen, and do not go on a stringent diet, as both can inhibit your ability to heal. If you develop a cold or infection of any kind, your surgery will probably be postponed.

You should arrange for someone to drive you home after your surgery, and to help you out for a day or two after you leave the hospital, if needed.

ABOUT THE OPERATION

The operation will be performed as inpatient in a clinic. You will have to stay for two nights. The anesthesia is general.

Complete abdominoplasty usually takes two to five hours, depending on the extent of work required. Partial abdominoplasty may take an hour or two.

Most commonly, a long incision is made just above the pubic area. The length of the scar will depend on the amount of tissue to be excised. The shape of the scar (more or less horizontal) will depend on your underwear. A second incision is made to free the navel from surrounding tissue. With partial abdominoplasty, the incision is much shorter and the navel may not be moved, although it may be pulled into an unnatural shape as the skin is tightened and stitched.

Next, the skin is separated from the abdominal wall all the way up to your ribs and lifts a large skin flap to reveal the vertical muscles in your abdomen. These muscles are tightened by pulling them close together and stitching them into their new position. This provides a firmer abdominal wall and narrows the waistline.

The skin flap is then stretched down and the extra skin is removed. A new hole is cut for your navel, which is then stitched in place. Finally, the incisions will be stitched, dressings will be applied, and a temporary tube may be inserted to drain excess fluid from the surgical site.

In partial abdominoplasty, the skin is separated only between the incision line and the navel. This skin flap is stretched down, the excess is removed, and the flap is stitched back into place.

We are doing more miniabdominoplasties combined with extensive liposuction (stomach, flanks). The result is much better than with classic abdominoplasty. It is contraindicated in heavy smokers.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

For the first few days, your abdomen will probably be swollen and you're likely to feel some pain and discomfort which can be controlled by medication. you will not be able to stand straight at first, but you should start walking as soon as possible. No lifting weights are allowed for 15 days. Some rest is advisable for seven days after the surgery. I do not recommend to travel before 7 days after the operation.

Surface stitches will be removed in five to seven days, and deeper sutures, with ends that protrude through the skin, will come out in two to three weeks. The dressing on your incision will be replaced by a support garment, which must be worn for 2 months..

GETTING BACK TO NORMAL

It may take you weeks or months to feel like your old self again. If you start out in top physical condition with strong abdominal muscles, recovery from abdominoplasty will be much faster. Some people return to work after two weeks, while others take three or four weeks to rest and recuperate.

Exercise will help you heal better. Even people who have never exercised before should begin an exercise program to reduce swelling, lower the chance of blood clots, and tone muscles. Vigorous exercise, however, should be avoided until you can do it comfortably.

Your scars may actually appear to worsen during the first three to six months as they heal, but this is normal. Expect it to take nine months to a year before your scars flatten out and lighten in color. While they'll never disappear completely, abdominal scars will not show under most clothing, even under bathing suits.

YOUR NEW LOOK

Abdominoplasty, whether partial or complete, produces excellent results for patients with weakened abdominal muscles or excess skin. And in most cases, the results are long lasting, if you follow a balanced diet and exercise regularly.

If you're realistic in your expectations and prepared for the consequences of a permanent scar and a lengthy recovery period, abdominoplasty may be just the answer for you.