

LIPOSUCTION

(Liposculpture)

INFORMATION SHEET

WHAT IS IT?

Liposuction is a common procedure for removing unwanted stubborn fat surgically, that diet and exercise may reduce, but will not budge completely. This fat is usually found in pockets.

IS IT PERMANENT?

Yes, because we are born with a certain number of fat cells.

When they are removed surgically, they cannot be produced again. But if we overeat and don't exercise, the remaining fat cells can expand. We will have less fat cells in that area and less chance of putting on weight again if we eat and exercise in moderation. This procedure is not a substitute for a good diet, but a treatment for removing bulges.

HOW MUCH CAN I LOSE?

Fat doesn't weigh much and therefore we cannot talk of it in kilos. We measure fat in terms of mls and litres. 1.5 litres can be removed in a Day Surgery safely. This is a large amount, but any more must be done in Hospital and this involves an overnight stay and is more costly.

Liposuction is not a way to reduce your overall weight. It changes your shape. You can best tell how much weight you have lost by your clothes, not the scales.

WHICH AREAS CAN BE DONE?

Thighs (inner and outer), stomach, knees, calves, ankles, buttocks, hips, underarms, chin, male breasts. In fact almost any part of the body.

DOES IT HURT?

This procedure is not painful to the majority of patients. It is more tolerable than going to the dentist. You are given a relaxant, which puts you into a mild twilight sleep. The area to be operated on, is numbed with a local anaesthetic. You may feel some discomfort for 24 hours, but this can be reduced with panadol or panadeine.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

One to two hours for the procedure. Because we give you a relaxant that will make your reflexes slower, allow four hours before someone picks you up, as we like to wait till you have woken up properly.

HOW MUCH DOES LIPOSUCTION COST?

It depends on the area(s) and the amount being done. But usually it will cost between \$1500 and \$4000. This includes the theatre costs and anaesthetic fees. Some people who have very large areas, or many different areas, may need to be done in more than one operating session. This is preferable rather than going to hospital and having additional fees for the overnight stay and anaesthetist, and expensive theatre fees.

CAN PRIVATE INSURANCE / MEDICARE COVER LIPOSUCTION?

Liposuction is not covered by health funds or medicare because it is a cosmetic procedure, not a medical problem. Some funds with top cover may pay theatre fees.

P.T.O.

ARE THERE COMPLICATIONS?

Liposuction is a procedure that involves fat, just beneath the skin, and not internal organs. Complications are very uncommon and the risks that are associated with liposuction are low. These include:

- ◆ **INFECTION** -Seldom occurs. Antibiotics are routinely prescribed prophylactically.
- ◆ **BLEEDING** -Surprisingly, bleeding is not a major problem. If there are collections of haematomas, these may need aspiration under local anaesthetic. It is common to have bruising in the area after surgery.
- ◆ **NERVE INJURY**-All major vessels and nerves are at a deeper plane. Nevertheless, small nerve fibres under the skin can be torn and cause temporary numbness.
- ◆ **SUPERFICIAL THROMBOPLEBITIS**-Sometimes, if the superficial veins are damaged in liposuction, the patient will notice a palpable reddish tender cord along the course of the vein.

There are risks associated with any surgery and the surgeon will be happy to discuss this at your consultation.

WILL I GET SKIN IRREGULARITIES?

This is the commonest complication after liposuction and may be visible in various forms. More often these irregularities will not be noticeable in the early period when swelling obscures them. As the swelling subsides, usually within four to six weeks, they become more obvious. If you have had irregularities before liposuction, the chances are that they may become more pronounced after the procedure. The dimples and pits can be remedied by massage, or injecting fat into the respective areas. It is very important that you do not blame the doctor or the procedure, if such complications occur. The doctor can only remove the fatty bulges, but the ultimate result depends on individual healing potential and being on a sensible diet. Wearing the correct corset and clothing afterwards will ensure a smoother result

WILL THERE BE BRUISING OR SWELLING?

Bruising is common with this surgery and usually disappears by two to three weeks. Swelling is also common with this latest "tumescence" technique, subsiding within the first week. By 4-6 weeks you will see your ideal size and shape. It is very important to wear your proper elastic support garment.

HOW LONG DO I WEAR THE SUPPORT GARMENT?

For one week, it should be worn night and day although it can be removed for showers. Then, for 12 hours a day for four to six weeks. It is best worn when you are most active. Our surgery can fit you with the correct support garment, or advise you on our surgical corset supplier. Tight clothing like jeans or underpants that are tight in the waist should not be worn for one month, as they will leave a demarcation line when the loose skin redrapes itself.

DO I NEED TIME OFF WORK?

Many patients go to work the following day. Pain is very individual, and depends upon the area operated. Three to four days off work would be ideal, but not compulsory.

WILL THE SKIN BE FLABBY?

Skin is usually very elastic, but this is individual. Once the fat layer is removed, skin sticks better to the muscle and usually shrinks back very well. The proper elastic support garments also help and are very important, along with continuing massage to ensure a smooth result.

CAN I DRIVE HOME AFTER?

No, because you have been given light sedation. You cannot catch public transport or drive till the following day. Please arrange for someone responsible to pick you up.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit our comprehensive internet site www.liposuction.com.au

We have made a video (on VHS or CD format), which may be viewed by those who wish a copy.

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