

Procedures - Tummy Tuck (Abdominoplasty) Info and FAQ's

Abdominoplasty (Tummy Tuck) is a cosmetic procedure that removes excessive fat from the lower abdomen. A tummy tuck is not a cure for obesity or an alternative for weight reduction. It's important your needs are discussed with Dr Merten before considering a tummy tuck.

A tummy tuck takes place under general anaesthetic. Excess fat and skin is removed to bring the body back into proportion. It's important patients are aware scarring is an inevitable result of any surgery and Dr Merten makes a concerted effort to reduce scarring.

Tummy tucks generally require a few days hospital stay for recovery. Depending on the individual recovery time does vary although most people are back to work within two to four weeks.

When is Abdominoplasty desirable?

You may wish to have an Abdominoplasty if your abdomen is affected by obesity, skin laxity following pregnancy or weight loss, or scars from previous surgery. The overall body appearance is improved by reducing and recontouring abdominal skin and fat. It is not a substitute for weight reduction, nor a cure for obesity.

How would this procedure help me?

A consultation with your plastic surgeon is the first step in considering Abdominoplasty. You should frankly discuss your goals and expectations, and your plastic surgeon will explain to you whether this operation is right for you. Suction lipectomy may be advised in addition to, or instead of, Abdominoplasty. You should always keep in mind that the desired result is improvement, not perfection.

How important are psychological factors in relation to this procedure?

Emotional stability is a primary factor to be considered before any aesthetic surgery is performed. A "new body" does not guarantee a new life or an end to all personal problems. It is mostly the mental attitude of the individual that determines a successful outcome. Abdominoplasty can improve your appearance and renew your self-confidence; the rest is entirely up to you.

How is Abdominoplasty performed?

The procedure is usually performed under general anaesthetic. Excess skin and fat is removed from the lower abdomen and the abdominal muscles tightened. In some patients the navel is repositioned.

Will the procedure leave any scars?

Although scars are the inevitable results of any surgery, your surgeon will make every effort to make the scars as inconspicuous as possible. In some circumstances the scars can be hidden inside the bikini line where they may be easy to conceal. However scarring is an individual characteristic and can vary from patient to patient.

What results can I expect?

The best results are obtained in patients of near normal weight with some laxity of the abdominal skin or a slight excess of fat or bulging of the abdominal muscles. The result is usually permanent although of course excessive weight changes or future pregnancies may undo some of the benefits of the surgery. Your surgeon is the best person to determine whether your expectations are surgically possible.

Will I be hospitalised for the procedure?

Although in some cases Abdominoplasty can be performed as a Day Case, in most situations you will require a few days convalescence in hospital. Your hospital stay will depend on your general health, the extent of the procedure, and your surgeon's advice.

When can I resume normal activities?

Returning to your normal activities is an individual matter, but most people return to work within two to four weeks, and to more vigorous exercise after six weeks. Your surgeon may advise the use of a supporting girdle to ensure optimal healing and contour.

Following Abdominoplasty, there is often a feeling of tightness in the lower abdomen and there is usually an area of diminished sensation, which persists for several months. A collection of fluid may form under the skin and require aspiration. Infection is rare and is treated promptly with antibiotics should it occur.