

Liposuction

What is liposuction?

Liposuction [LAHY-poh-suhk-shuh] is a surgical procedure that breaks up and removes unwanted fat deposits under the skin to shape areas on the body. There are several different ways to do liposuction, and patients can check with their doctor to see which one will work best for their goal.

Why should I consider liposuction?

Liposuction is a cosmetic procedure. This means that the surgery is focused on enhancing your appearance. Liposuction is used to:

- Reduce unwanted fat under the skin
- Help shape an area with uneven fatty deposits
- Restore physical appearance after reconstructive (plastic) surgery
- Treat medical conditions such as:
 - Excessive sweating in the underarm
 - Benign lipoma
 - Abnormal breast tissue in males

Liposuction is not a form of weight loss or treatment for obesity. Patients who do not eat well and exercise after this procedure are likely to form new fat deposits.

What are the risks?

- Infection
- Swelling and bruising of surgical area
- Changes in skin sensation over the surgical area
- Allergic reaction to anesthesia or medicines
- Bleeding during or after the surgery
- Developing a blood or fat clot
- Stroke or heart attack



When should I call my doctor?

Call your doctor if you have:

- A bandage or wrap that becomes too tight to tolerate
- Bright red blood or drainage
- Drainage from incision sites that smells bad
- Shortness of breath (trouble breathing)
- Chills or a temperature above 101° F (38° C)
- Nausea and vomiting that doesn't get better
- Questions or if something just doesn't feel right

What do I need to do before surgery?

- **Meet with the surgeon to discuss the plan for the surgery.** You will have a physical exam and discuss your health history.
- **Give your doctor a list of your medicines.** Be sure to list ALL prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines you take, including vitamins and herbal supplements. Some of these can increase your risk of bleeding, and you'll have to stop taking them for a while before the surgery.
- **Stop smoking and drinking alcohol at least 4 weeks before the surgery.** Smoking keeps wounds from healing properly and increases your chance of infection. Use this as a good time to stop smoking for good. Alcohol reduces blood flow to the entire body, including the liver where medicines are metabolized.
- **Follow the instructions on when to stop eating and drinking before your surgery.** This will help avoid anesthesia complications. If you do not follow these instructions, your surgery may be postponed.

- **Arrange for a responsible adult to take you home after surgery** and to care for you during the first 24 hours (1 day) after your surgery.

What can I expect after surgery?

- **Most patients will go home the day of surgery.**
- **You will have several small incisions, skin discoloration, swelling, and bruising.** The areas will be wrapped tightly and there will be dressings placed over the incision sites. You can expect some weeping and drainage at the incision sites for the first 24 to 48 hours (1 to 2 days).
- **You may need to wear a binder or compression garment** over the surgical sites to help reduce swelling.
- **Plan time for rest and recovery.** Too much activity on the first few days can cause increased pain and swelling.

- **Take small walks to help you stay strong and heal faster.** Gradually increase your physical activity as you feel able.
- **Do not shower, bathe, swim, or use a hot tub** until your doctor says it's okay.
- **You can return to work or school when your doctor says it's okay** — usually in a couple days.
- **Go to your follow-up appointment as scheduled,** 1 to 2 weeks after your surgery.



My follow-up appointment

Date/Time: _____

Place: _____

Doctor: _____



Questions for my doctor

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