

TUMMY TUCK

What is a Tummy Tuck?

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MODEL



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WHAT IS A TUMMY TUCK?

Also known as abdominoplasty, a tummy tuck removes excess fat and skin and, in most cases, restores weakened or separated muscles creating an abdominal profile that is smoother and firmer.

A flat and well-toned abdomen is something many of us strive for through exercise and weight control. Sometimes these methods cannot achieve our goals. Even individuals of otherwise normal body weight and proportion can develop an abdomen that protrudes or is loose and sagging. The most common causes of this include:

- Aging
- Heredity
- Pregnancy
- Prior surgery
- Significant fluctuations in weight

What it won't do:

A tummy tuck is not a substitute for weight loss or an appropriate exercise program. Although the results of a tummy tuck are technically permanent, the positive outcome can be greatly diminished by significant fluctuations in your weight. For this reason, individuals who are planning substantial weight loss or women who may be considering future pregnancies would be advised to postpone a tummy tuck. Also, a tummy tuck cannot correct stretch marks, although these may be removed or somewhat improved if they are located on the areas of excess skin that will be excised.



CONSULTATION & PREPARING FOR SURGERY

The success and safety of your tummy tuck procedure depends very much on your complete candidness during your consultation. You'll be asked a number of questions about your health, desires and lifestyle.

Is it right for me?

Tummy tuck surgery is a highly individualized procedure and you should do it for yourself, not to fulfill someone else's desires or to try to fit any sort of ideal image. Abdominoplasty is a good option for you if:

- You are physically healthy and at a stable weight
- You have realistic expectations
- You are a non-smoker
- You are bothered by the appearance of your abdomen

During your consultation be prepared to discuss:

- Your surgical goals
- Medical conditions, drug allergies, and medical treatments
- Current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco, and drug use
- Previous surgeries

Your surgeon will also:

- Evaluate your general health status and any pre-existing health conditions or risk factors
- Take photographs
- Discuss your options
- Recommend a course of treatment
- Discuss likely outcomes of the tummy tuck and any risks or potential complications

Prior to surgery, you may be asked to:

- Get lab testing or a medical evaluation
- Take certain medications or adjust your current medications
- Stop smoking
- Avoid taking aspirin, anti-inflammatory drugs, and herbal supplements as they can increase bleeding

A tummy tuck may be performed in an accredited office-based surgical facility, licensed ambulatory surgical center, or a hospital. If your tummy tuck is performed on an outpatient basis, be sure to arrange for someone to drive you to and from surgery and to stay with you for at least the first night following surgery.

THE PROCEDURE

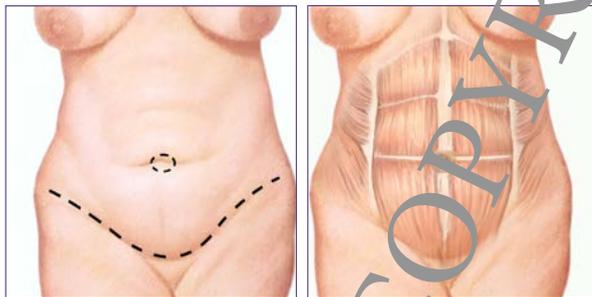
Step 1 – Anesthesia

Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedures. The choices include intravenous sedation and general anesthesia. Your doctor will recommend the best choice for you.

Step 2 – The incision

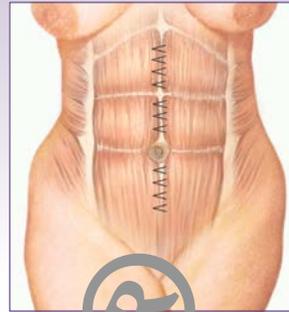
A full tummy tuck requires a horizontally-oriented incision in the area between the pubic hairline and belly button. The shape and length of the incision will be determined by the amount of excess skin. Once the abdominal skin is lifted, the underlying weakened abdominal muscles are repaired.

A second incision around the navel may be necessary to remove excess skin in the upper abdomen. The upper abdominal skin is pulled down like a window shade. The excess skin is trimmed and the remaining skin is sutured together. A new opening for the belly button is created. The belly button is popped through to the surface and sutured into position.

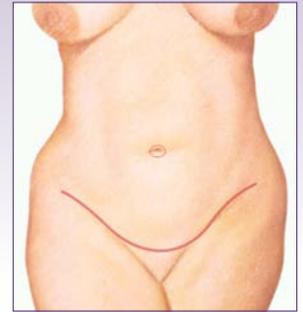


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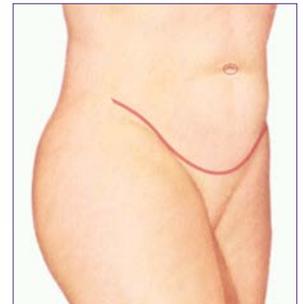


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Before



After

Step 3 – Closing the incisions

Sutures, skin adhesives, tapes or clips close the skin incisions.

Step 4 – See the results

Your tummy tuck will result in a flatter, firmer abdominal contour that is more proportionate with your body type and weight. The final results may be initially obscured by swelling and your inability to stand fully upright until internal healing is complete. Within a week or two, you should be standing tall and confident in your new slimmer profile.

RISKS & SAFETY

The decision to have a tummy tuck is extremely personal, and you'll have to decide if the benefits will achieve your goals and if the risks and potential complications are acceptable. You will be asked to sign consent forms to ensure that you fully understand the procedure and any risks.

The risks include:

- Anesthesia risks
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Fluid accumulation (seroma)
- Poor wound healing
- Skin loss
- Numbness or other changes in skin sensation
- Skin discoloration and/or prolonged swelling
- Unfavorable scarring
- Recurrent looseness of skin
- Fatty tissue found deep in the skin might die (fat necrosis)
- Deep vein thrombosis, cardiac and pulmonary complications
- Asymmetry
- Suboptimal aesthetic result
- Possibility of revisional surgery
- Persistent pain

These risks and others will be fully discussed prior to your consent. It's important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon.



MODEL

RECOVERY AFTER SURGERY

Following your surgery, dressings or bandages may be applied to your incisions, and you may be wrapped in an elastic bandage or a compression garment to minimize swelling and support your abdomen as it heals. Small, thin tubes may be temporarily placed under the skin to drain any excess blood or fluid that may collect.

You will be given specific instructions that may include how to care for the surgical site and drains, medications to apply or take orally to aid healing and reduce the potential for infection, specific concerns to look for at the surgical site or in your general health, and when to follow up with your plastic surgeon.

Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon specific questions about what you can expect during your individual recovery period:

- Where will I be taken after my surgery is complete?
- What medication will I be given or prescribed after surgery?
- Will I have dressings/bandages after surgery?
- When will they be removed?
- When will the stitches be removed?
- How will I bathe?
- How long will I wear the pressure garment?
- When can I resume normal activity and exercise?
- When do I return for follow-up care?

RESULTS

The final results of your tummy tuck may be initially obscured by swelling and your inability to stand fully upright until internal healing is complete. Your tummy tuck will result in a flatter, firmer abdominal contour that is more proportionate with your body type and weight. Previous abdominal surgery may limit the potential results of a tummy tuck. In women who have undergone cesarean section, the existing scars may be incorporated into the new scar. Scar may take several months to a year to fade as much as they will.

Although good results are expected from your procedure, there is no guarantee. In some situations, it may not be possible to achieve optimal results with a single surgical procedure and another surgery may be necessary.

Following your physician's instructions is essential to the success of your surgery. It's important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, swelling, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Your doctor will give you specific instructions on how to care for yourself.

COST

Prices for tummy tuck procedures can vary. A surgeon's cost may be based on his or her experience, the type of procedure used, and the geographic location of the office. Many plastic surgeons offer patient financing plans, so be sure to ask.

Cost may include:

- Anesthesia fees
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Medical tests
- Post-surgery garments
- Prescriptions for medication
- Surgeon's fee

Most health insurance does not cover cosmetic surgery or related complications. You must carefully review your health insurance policy.

Your satisfaction involves more than a fee:

When choosing a plastic surgeon for tummy tuck, remember that the surgeon's experience and your comfort with him or her are just as important as the final cost of the surgery.

Plastic surgery involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting an American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) member you can trust. ASPS member surgeons meet rigorous standards:

- Board certification by the American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS) or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®

- Complete at least six years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of three years of plastic surgery residency training
- Pass comprehensive oral and written exams
- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete continuing medical education, including patient safety each year
- Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified surgical facilities

Do not be confused by other official sounding boards and certifications.

The ABPS is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), which has approved medical specialty boards since 1934. There is no ABMS recognized certifying board with "cosmetic surgery" in its name. By choosing a member of The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, you can be assured that you are choosing a qualified, highly trained plastic surgeon who is board-certified by the ABPS or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

This brochure is intended strictly for educational purposes. It is not intended to make any representations or warranties about the outcome of any procedure. It is not a substitute for a thorough, in-person consultation with a board certified plastic surgeon.



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