

TUMMY TUCK

Abdominoplasty



The Symbol of Excellence in Plastic Surgery®

A public education service of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons®.

The first step:

Choose a surgeon you can trust

Plastic surgery involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting a surgeon you can trust. A doctor's board certification is one of the best indicators of his or her training. Ask for certification from The American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS), the only one of the 24 boards approved by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) that certifies physicians in plastic surgery of the face and all areas of the body. To be ABPS board-certified, a physician must meet these rigorous standards:

- ▶ Graduate from an accredited medical school
- ▶ Complete at least **five** years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of **two** years of plastic surgery residency training
- ▶ Pass comprehensive oral and written exams

American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) Members must:

- ▶ Be certified by the ABPS or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®
- ▶ Complete continuing medical education including patient safety each year
- ▶ Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed or Medicare-certified surgical facilities



Beauty for life:

Enhancing your appearance with a tummy tuck

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:

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

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.

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 may 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, generally those treated areas below the belly button.

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 feeling that your tummy is too large

What to expect during your consultation

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.

Be prepared to discuss:

- ▶ Why you want the surgery, your expectations and desired outcome
- ▶ Medical conditions, drug allergies and medical treatments
- ▶ Use of current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- ▶ Previous surgeries

Your surgeon may also:

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

Preparing for surgery

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 well in advance of surgery
- ▶ Avoid taking aspirin, anti-inflammatory drugs and herbal supplements as they can increase bleeding

Special instructions you receive will cover:

- ▶ What to do on the day of surgery
- ▶ The use of anesthesia during your tummy tuck
- ▶ Post-operative care and follow-up

Important facts about the safety and risks of abdominoplasty

The decision to have tummy tuck surgery 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. Your plastic surgeon and/or staff will explain in detail the risks associated with surgery. You will be asked to sign consent forms to ensure that you fully understand the procedure you will undergo and any risks or potential complications.

Possible risks of abdominoplasty include:

- ▶ Unfavorable scarring
- ▶ Bleeding (hematoma)
- ▶ Infection
- ▶ Fluid accumulation
- ▶ Poor wound healing
- ▶ Skin loss
- ▶ Blood clots
- ▶ Numbness or other changes in skin sensation
- ▶ Anesthesia risks
- ▶ Skin discoloration and/or prolonged swelling
- ▶ Fatty tissue found deep in the skin might die (fat necrosis)
- ▶ Major wound separation
- ▶ Asymmetry
- ▶ Recurrent looseness of skin
- ▶ Pain, which may persist
- ▶ Deep vein thrombosis, cardiac and pulmonary complications
- ▶ Persistent swelling in the legs
- ▶ Nerve damage
- ▶ Possibility of revisional surgery
- ▶ Suboptimal aesthetic result

You'll need help

If your abdominoplasty 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.

Procedural Steps:

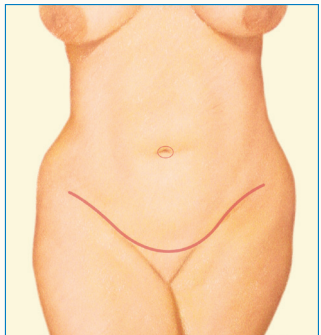
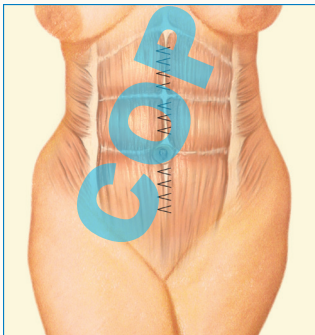
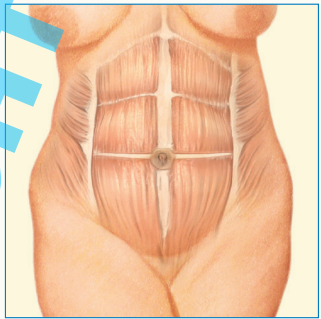
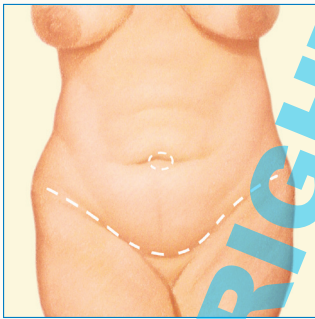
What happens during tummy tuck surgery?

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.

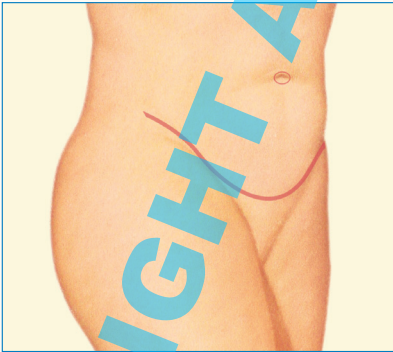
Step 2 – The incision

A full tummy tuck requires a horizontally-oriented incision in the area between the pubic hairline and navel. The shape and length of the incision will be determined by the degree of correction necessary. Through this incision, weakened abdominal muscles are repaired and sutured and excess fat, tissue and skin is removed. A second incision around the navel may be necessary to remove excess skin in the upper abdomen.



Procedural Steps:

What happens during tummy tuck surgery?



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 about your new slimmer profile.

My recovery

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 to support your abdomen as it heals. A small, thin tube 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?
- ▶ Are stitches removed? When?
- ▶ When can I resume normal activity and exercise?
- ▶ When do I return for follow-up care?

Previous abdominal surgery may limit the potential results of a tummy tuck. In women who have undergone cesarean section, the existing scars may often be incorporated into the new scar.



How much will tummy tuck surgery cost?

Cost is always a consideration in elective surgery. Prices for tummy tucks can vary widely. A surgeon's cost for a tummy tuck may vary based on his or her experience, the type of procedure used, as well as geographic office location. Many plastic surgeons offer patient financing plans, so be sure to ask.

Cost may include:

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

Your satisfaction involves more than a fee

When choosing a plastic surgeon for a 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.

Words to know

Abdominoplasty: A surgical procedure to correct the apron of excess skin hanging over your abdomen.

Diastasis: Condition in which abdominal muscles have separated.

General anesthesia: Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness.

Hematoma: Blood pooling beneath the skin.

Intravenous sedation: Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to help you relax.

Liposuction: Also called lipoplasty or suction lipectomy, this procedure vacuums out fat from beneath the skin's surface to reduce fullness.

Local anesthesia: A drug is injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain.

Sutures: Stitches used by surgeons to hold skin and tissue together.

Tummy tuck: A surgical procedure to correct the apron of excess skin hanging over your abdomen.

Questions to ask my plastic surgeon

Use this checklist as a guide during your consultation

- Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- Are you a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons?
- Were you specifically trained in the field of plastic surgery?
- How many years of plastic surgery training have you had?
- Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- Is the office-based surgical facility accredited by a nationally- or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- What surgical technique is recommended for me?
- How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- How are complications handled?
- How can I expect my stomach to look over time? After pregnancy?
- What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the cosmetic outcome of my tummy tuck?
- Do you have before-and-after photos I can look at for this procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

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Notes

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