

CM04lite Abdominoplasty

Expires end of December 2019

A more detailed version of this procedure specific information sheet is available. Please ask your health practitioner at Joondalup Health Campus for a copy.

Write questions or notes here:



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This document will give you information about an abdominoplasty. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is an abdominoplasty?

An abdominoplasty (or 'tummy tuck') is an operation to improve the appearance of your abdomen. It may involve removing excess skin and fat and tightening your abdominal muscles.

Is an abdominoplasty suitable for me?

It is common for the skin of your abdomen not to shrink back after pregnancy or losing a lot of weight. You are most likely to benefit from an abdominoplasty if your abdomen makes you feel uncomfortable or you are self-conscious about what your abdomen looks like.

Your surgeon will carry out a detailed assessment before deciding if surgery is suitable for you.

What are the benefits of surgery?

Your abdomen should be firmer and have a better shape.

Are there any alternatives to an abdominoplasty?

Your appearance may improve if you follow an exercise programme.

If the problem is caused mainly by too much fat, it may be better to have only liposuction, where the fat is sucked out using a small tube.

What does the operation involve?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and usually takes two to five hours. The following are the main techniques that your surgeon may use.

• Standard abdominoplasty

This technique is suitable if you have a lot of excess skin.

Your surgeon will make a curved cut from one hip to the other. They will remove any excess skin and fat. Your surgeon will cut under the skin above your umbilicus (belly button), pulling it downwards and tightening it (see figure 1).

Sometimes they will need to reconstruct your umbilicus and tighten the muscles of your abdominal wall.

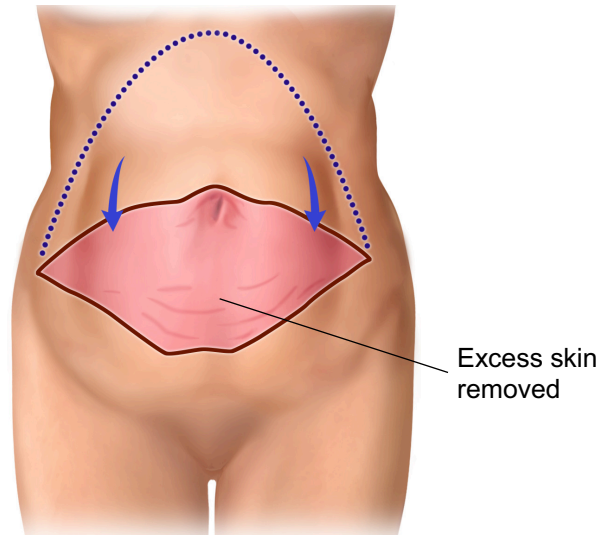


Figure 1

A standard abdominoplasty

• Fleur-de-lis abdominoplasty

This technique is suitable if you have a lot of excess skin hanging downwards and around your abdomen.

The procedure is similar to a standard abdominoplasty. Your surgeon will also tighten your waist.

• Mini-abdominoplasty

This technique is suitable if you have only a little excess skin.

Your surgeon will need to make only a small cut just above the pubic area to remove the excess skin.

• Lower bodylift or belt lipectomy

These techniques are suitable after significant weight loss.

Your surgeon will remove excess skin and fat from your sides, abdomen and lower back.

• Endoscopic abdominoplasty

This technique is suitable if you only need only to have the muscles of your abdominal wall tightened. Your surgeon will make small cuts and use surgical instruments to tighten the muscles.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Blood clots
- Unsightly scarring

2 Specific complications

- Developing a collection of blood or fluid
- Numbness or continued pain
- Wound-healing problems
- Cosmetic problems

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after two to three days.

You should be able to return to work after two weeks depending on your type of work. Do not have sex for three weeks.

The healthcare team will advise you on exercising to help keep you to a healthy weight and to improve the tone of your abdominal muscles.

The results of an abdominoplasty improve gradually over the first six months. The best results for you will happen if you keep to a healthy weight and exercise regularly.

Summary

An abdominoplasty is an operation to improve the appearance of your abdomen. You should consider the options carefully and have realistic expectations about the results.

Acknowledgements

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