

Abdominoplasty (Tummy Tuck) Information Sheet

PROCEDURE

Abdominoplasty is a procedure that removes excessive skin and fat from the middle and lower part of the abdomen to improve abdominal contour. The skin and fat layers are separated from the muscles of the abdomen and any weakness of the abdominal muscles is repaired and/or tightened. The umbilicus (belly button) is repositioned and the skin pulled tight. The extra skin and fat are removed with an incision that typically runs hip-to-hip, sitting low in the bikini line. As with many other body contour surgeries, patients are exchanging contour for scars.

PRE-OPERATIVE

Prior to booking surgery, you will need to decide who your support person will be. It is important that they are aware of the type of surgery you are having, that they are not “squeamish” (they will be assisting with hygiene and mobility), and that they are available solely to you during your immediate recovery period (they should not have any other commitments). At the minimum, you cannot be left alone for the first 24 hours after surgery, and you should have someone available to help you 24/7 for about 3-5 days with regular daily activities, such as making meals, walking the dog, etc. You will need assistance with your first hair wash and getting in and out of bed. For patients with young children, additional support is required. We recommend two supports: one to care for you, and one to care for your children. We advise against driving until after you are seen in office postoperatively, as you cannot drive while taking pain medication.

After you have paid a deposit and a surgical date has been confirmed, you will receive more specific information and a review of what you are required to complete before surgery. Once you have booked your date, please ensure you have the following supplies on hand:

- Stool Softener (i.e. Colace or Senokot) as pain medications can cause constipation
- Tylenol Extra Strength and ibuprofen 400 mg

You will be asked to stay at the Parkside Hotel (our building), for a minimum of one night (day of surgery). This enables us to monitor and help care for you after surgery. We recommend checking in the day before, if at all possible, to minimize stress on your surgical day. If this is not possible, you may request an early check-in, though this cannot be guaranteed. If checking in the day of surgery, your support person's name must then be on the reservation, as they will have to check in on your behalf. To book your stay at Parkside, please call: 1-855-616-3557, or visit our website. Please mention you are booking under the “clinic 805” rate, and they will give you a discount on your room.

Please ensure your nail polish is removed prior to surgery. If you have gel or acrylic nails, you **must** at the minimum have the polish from your left ring finger removed so you can be monitored during surgery.

DAY OF SURGERY

This procedure is done under a general anesthetic, so you will be required to fast after midnight the night before. You must be discharged from the clinic with a responsible adult (preferably the person who will be helping care for you after surgery). A prescription for pain medication will be provided if needed.

Arrival time for surgery will not be provided to you until about 1-2 weeks prior, so it is important that both you and your support person do not have any other responsibilities that day.

POST-OPERATIVE & LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP

Activities, positioning, dressings, drains, pain management, and incision care will be reviewed by our clinic nurses. One of them will visit you at the hotel after surgery to help you get settled and teach you and your support person how to care for yourself once you are at home.

During the first week after surgery, you will be asked to position yourself to take tension off your incision. You will be advised to rest in bed with your shoulders elevated on pillows, and to also place pillows under your knees. When upright, you should try not to stand up tall, but rather walk a little hunched over. This will protect the abdominal muscle repair and should be done for about 10 days, unless otherwise advised by a nurse or your surgeon. You will be asked to ambulate post-operatively, and activity increases as tolerated.

You will be wearing a post-operative Velcro binder or compression garment to support the abdominal muscles, minimize fluid accumulation, and secure your dressings in place. This binder/garment is usually worn for 4-6 weeks after surgery.

Our office nurse will see you in follow-up as required. Most abdominoplasty patients are assessed in office around day 7 and sometimes again at 14 days post-op.)

You must refrain from strenuous physical activity, heavy lifting (including lifting and carrying your children), and excessive abdominal movement/engagement of the abdominal muscles for about six weeks after surgery. Most patients return to physical jobs and start to reincorporate physical activity around 4-6 weeks and gradually work up to their preoperative activity level.

Though rare, post-operative complications from any procedure are possible. These may include bleeding (hematoma), blood clots (PE or DVT), infection, seroma, asymmetry, contour abnormalities, delayed healing, and/or unsatisfactory scarring. Altered sensations (numbness, tingling, and/or hypersensitivity) are to be expected while you are healing, and can persist for several weeks or months. Our health care team follows you closely to recognize and treat any complications, should they arise.

As with any surgery, results cannot be guaranteed. The goal of cosmetic plastic surgery is improvement, and perfection is not attainable. Final results depend on many factors and healing can vary from patient to patient. It is important to remember to have patience during convalescence to allow your body time to recuperate and settle.

Dr. Robinson will see you approximately 6 weeks after your surgery and again approximately at 6 months, post-operatively to assess your surgical result. Post-operative photos are usually taken at this visit. If revisions are required, they would be discussed, and a surgical plan set up at this time.