

Lipoplasty & Fat Grafting Information Sheet

PROCEDURE

Lipoplasty is the surgical removal of unwanted fat deposits from different areas of the body by suctioning them away. This involves injecting the involved area with fluid in order to facilitate removal of the fat deposits. Everyone has a fixed number of fat cells, which can increase in size with excessive food intake. By aspirating these fat cells, liposuction appears to prevent recurrence of these fat deposits (though it cannot be guaranteed). The main objective of the surgery is not to remove excess weight, but to improve contour of the body. Small incisions are made near the area of lipodystrophy (excess fat); fluid is then injected, followed by the use of a cannula, which suctions out the fluid and the fat. In some cases, this fat can be saved and injected into another area of the body. This is known as “fat grafting.”

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”, 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 for about 3-5 days with regular daily activities, such as making meals, running errands, walking the dog, etc. 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
- Gatorade or Powerade (electrolyte replacement drink)

DAY OF SURGERY

Lipoplasty is usually done under a general anesthetic so you will be advised to fast after midnight the night before surgery. Surgery can vary in length, depending on the number of areas being treated, and recovery from anesthetic is approximately 1-3 hours. 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

You can expect swelling, bruising, and some discomfort and/or numbness in the surgical area. Bruising and swelling typically peak around day three post-op and slowly resolve after that (but can persist for 2-3 weeks). You may notice a small amount of drainage from your incisions. Patients can remove dressings and shower after 48 hours.

You will be discharged in a pressure garment. This must be worn 24-7 for about 4-6 weeks (may be removed for washing/showering). You will be seen by one of our nurses in the office around day 7-10 to remove the stitches from your incisions. At that time, you may be fitted for a secondary garment

POST-OPERATIVE & LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP, CONTINUED

Light activity is encouraged (eg: walking) while you are healing, but you must refrain from strenuous physical activity (elevating your heart rate) for approximately 4-6 weeks. Most patients return to physical jobs and start to reincorporate physical activity around four weeks post-op and gradually work up to their preoperative activity level.

Direct pressure, compression, and ice to fat grafting sites should be **avoided** during the first six weeks after surgery. This will help encourage the best possible retention of grafted fat cells. Depending on the graft site, Dr. Robinson may provide more detailed instructions for post-operative management of your graft.

Though rare, complications from any procedure are possible. These may include bleeding (hematoma), infection, asymmetry, contour abnormalities/dimpling, blood clots (PE or DVT), loss of fat graft and/or an inability to predict the percentage of fat graft survival, and the potential need for revisional surgery. 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 post-op and again at approximately 6 months to monitor the final contouring results. Post-operative photos may be done at this time. This procedure especially requires patience, as your final results may not be apparent for at least 6-12 months. This time is needed for complete resolution of swelling and reconnection of soft tissue. If revisions are required, they would be discussed, and a surgical plan set up at your follow-up appointment.