

ABDOMINOPLASTY

Flatten and Firm

FOR PREVIEW ONLY

Knowledge is Beautiful

If you are considering an abdominoplasty, there are several things to think about to ensure that you are making an informed decision. Abdominoplasty, also known as a tummy tuck, removes the excess fat and loose skin from the abdomen that are resistant to diet and exercise. Following abdominoplasty, your abdomen will be firmer and flatter, and your overall body contour will be enhanced.

AN ABDOMINOPLASTY MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU IF:

- You have excess or sagging abdominal skin, with or without stretch marks
- Your abdomen bulges, seems soft or is out of proportion to the rest of your body
- Your abdominal muscles have been weakened after childbearing or as a result of aging
- You have excess fat that is concentrated in your abdomen, and efforts to reduce it with diet and exercise have been unsuccessful
- You are self-conscious about your abdominal appearance and want to return to the flat stomach that you had when you were younger
- You are healthy and have realistic expectations

If you are planning to lose weight, or even gain weight (for example, due to pregnancy), discuss this with your plastic surgeon. Scarring from previous abdominal surgery or a caesarean scar may limit the results of your abdominoplasty.

A MEMBER OF THE AESTHETIC SOCIETY

The Aesthetic Society is a group of the most advanced board-certified aesthetic plastic surgeons, here to help you safely become your most beautiful self.



BEYOND BOARD CERTIFIED

Unlike some plastic surgeons, members of The Aesthetic Society are board-certified by accredited boards, like the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS) in the US, which require the highest level of education, training, and experience.

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.



*If you live outside the United States or Canada, check your surgeon's affiliation with the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS). Canadian plastic surgeons are certified by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

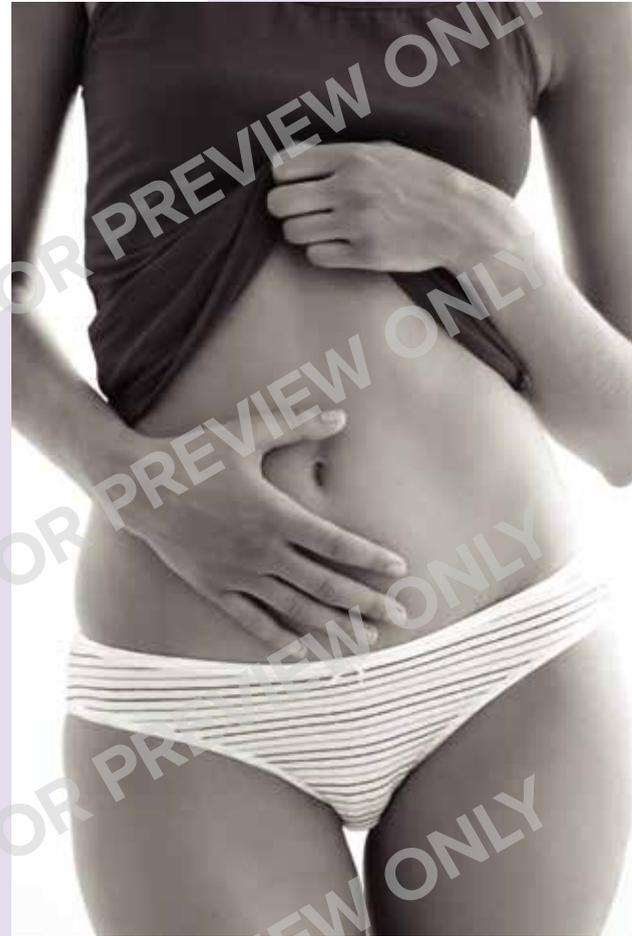
Preparing For Surgery

You may be asked to undergo a medical evaluation or to have lab tests prior to surgery. In some instances your plastic surgeon may recommend that you lose weight, engage in exercises to strengthen your abdominal muscles or make other lifestyle changes before surgery to help improve your results and minimize possible complications. Drinking lots of water before and after the procedure is essential for safe recovery and optimal outcomes.

BEFORE YOUR PROCEDURE, YOUR SURGEON WILL DISCUSS WITH YOU:

- The impact that smoking and tobacco products have on your surgery. Your surgeon may recommend that you stop smoking and using other tobacco products, including nicotine patches, gum, and nicotine-containing electronic cigarettes before surgery.
- The importance of avoiding aspirin, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDs: Advil, Motrin, Aleve), and vitamins or homeopathic regimens before surgery, since these products can increase bleeding.

Abdominoplasty usually is performed on an outpatient basis or with a brief hospital stay, commonly no longer than one night. Whether you are released the day of surgery or the following day, you should arrange for someone to drive you home and to stay with you for the next day or two.



Your surgeon will provide complete instructions on preoperative and postoperative care. Read the instructions carefully to ensure that you fully understand them and know what to expect before, during, and after your procedure.

Procedural Steps

STEP 1 | ANESTHESIA

Abdominoplasty is usually performed under general anesthesia but may be done under local anesthesia with intravenous sedation. Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedure, which your surgeon will discuss with you.

STEP 2 | THE INCISIONS

An abdominoplasty is usually done through a horizontal incision made low on your abdomen either in, or just above, the pubic area. The incision extends laterally toward the pelvic bones; its length depends largely on the amount of skin to be removed and the type of abdominoplasty technique performed. Another small incision is made around your navel. While the resulting scars will fade with time, it is permanent but easily hidden under most swimsuits and undergarments.

If your loose skin is limited to the region below the navel, then you may be a candidate for a “mini” tummy tuck, a modified procedure that removes loose lower abdominal skin and is often combined with abdominal liposuction for fat removal. The resulting scar is usually shorter than in a “full” tummy tuck and there is no need for a second incision around the navel.



An incision is usually made just within or above the pubic area and around the navel.



The incision for a “mini” tummy tuck, is shorter and does not require a second incision.

STEP 3 | THE PROCEDURE

During the procedure, loose underlying tissue and muscle are sutured together to tighten the abdominal wall and to contour and reshape your abdomen and waistline. Sometimes liposuction may be used to remove excess abdominal fat, or the abdominoplasty may be combined with liposuction of the “love handles” or flanks. In some instances small drains may be placed. Typically, absorbable sutures are buried under the skin and do not require removal.

Next, the abdominal skin is pulled downward and the excess is removed. Lower abdominal skin that contains stretch marks may be removed as well. Any remaining stretch marks may be flattened and improved, but you should not expect a dramatic change in their appearance.

A small opening is made for your navel, which is pulled through and sutured in its normal position.

STEP 4 | THE RESULTS

Abdominoplasty will make your stomach firmer and flatter. The resulting scars are permanent but will heal and fade over time.



Before surgery.



After surgery, you will have a firmer, flatter abdomen. The resulting scars are permanent but will fade somewhat over time.



Final Results

Abdominoplasty will make your abdomen firmer and flatter and will enhance your body contour. Following this procedure, many patients experience an enhanced self-image. You may find that you feel more confident about your appearance and that you feel more comfortable in your clothing.

HOW LONG WILL THE RESULTS LAST AFTER AN ABDOMINOPLASTY?

Unless you gain or lose a significant amount of weight or become pregnant, your results should be long lasting. However, gravity and the effects of aging may alter your abdominal region. If, after a period of years, you become dissatisfied with your abdominal appearance, you may choose to undergo a second procedure to restore a more youthful body contour.

MAINTAINING A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PLASTIC SURGEON

You will return to your plastic surgeon's office for follow-up care at prescribed intervals, at which time your progress will be evaluated. Many surgeons encourage their patients to come back for periodic checkups to observe and discuss the long-term results of surgery. Final results, including scar appearance, are achieved at one year.

Please remember that the relationship with your plastic surgeon does not end when you leave the operating room. If you have questions or concerns during your recovery or need additional information at a later time, you should contact your plastic surgeon.

Recovery, Safety and Risks

Immediately following your operation, you may be asked to wear special support garments. You may experience decreased sensation in your abdominal skin after surgery but this will return in the next weeks and months as your tissues heal. It will take a full year for full sensation to return, with some patients reporting mild numbness around the navel.

Typically, the greatest amount of discomfort is experienced during the first 72 hours following abdominoplasty. The level of discomfort usually diminishes day-by-day and may be effectively treated by various pain medications.

After surgery, you will be encouraged to get out of bed and walk to hasten recovery. It will be important to remain in a flexed position both in and out of bed for the first week. You should avoid strenuous exercise, straining, bending, and lifting until cleared to do so by your plastic surgeon. Your plastic surgeon will instruct you about returning to work and normal activities. Following abdominoplasty, you will still be able to perform sit-ups and engage in other abdominal exercises.

SURGERY RISKS

All surgery has risks and potential complications. Your surgeon will review this information with you. Be sure you understand these potential complications before proceeding with any surgical procedure because no surgeon can offer risk-free surgery or guarantee a perfect result.

Questions to Ask My Surgeon



FEEDBACK ABOUT MY CASE, GOALS, AND PROCEDURE

1. Am I a good candidate for abdominoplasty or a mini-abdominoplasty?
2. Are my desired results reasonable and realistic?
3. Do you have abdominoplasty before-and-after photos I can look at?
4. Where do you plan to make the incision(s), and will the scars be visible?
5. What kind of anesthesia will be administered?
6. What are the costs associated with my abdominoplasty?
7. What can I do to help get the best results?

POSTOPERATIVE QUESTIONS

1. What kind of recovery period can I expect, and when can I resume normal activities?
2. How can I expect my abdomen to look over time?
3. What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
4. How often and what type of revisions are sometimes needed after an abdominoplasty?

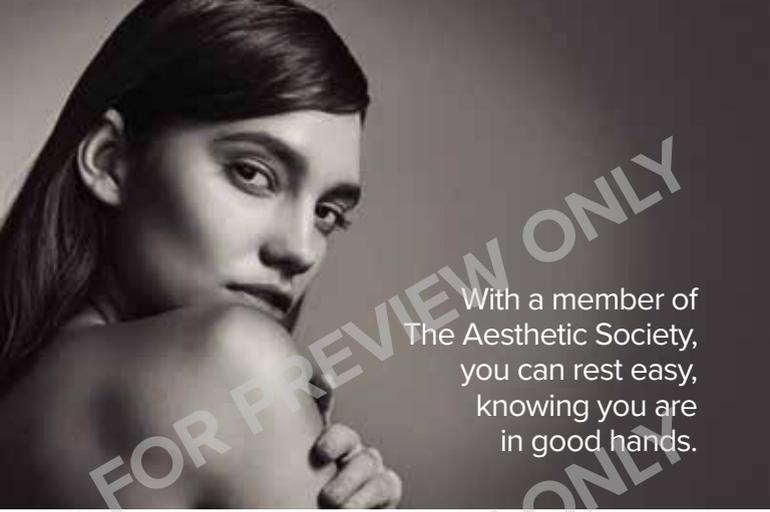
Your Next Step

After reading about abdominoplasty, you will understand more about this procedure and what it can do for you. Your plastic surgeon will evaluate whether you are a good candidate for the procedures that interest you and the kind of results you can expect. Your surgeon will also provide detailed information about risks, possible complications, and potential benefits.

Advances are constantly being made in the field of cosmetic plastic surgery, and your plastic surgeon may also present his or her preferred variations to the surgical techniques described in this booklet. If there is a cosmetic procedure that you have heard about from another source, such as a magazine article, TV program, or on social media, ask your plastic surgeon whether it will benefit you. If there are any problems or safety concerns, your surgeon will alert you to those issues.

Above all, confide in your plastic surgeon by thoroughly discussing your goals, expectations, and concerns. Your plastic surgeon's most important job is to help you safely and comfortably achieve physical well-being and satisfaction with your appearance.

For more information about aesthetic medical procedures, visit theaestheticsociety.org, the most comprehensive collection of information online.



With a member of
The Aesthetic Society,
you can rest easy,
knowing you are
in good hands.

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