

# What is liposuction?



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Liposuction – a way of getting rid of that extra fat on the body!

In the busy world of today, managing time in our daily routine has become the most difficult thing to do! Because of which, people barely get time to exercise and keep themselves fit. And to add on to it, canned food exists in opulence! In a world which is ideal, Liposuction (Fat removal) would not be needed. Everyone would eat moderately, in the appropriate quantities and would exercise. But the world is far from ideal! And hence, with each passing year, Plastic Surgery for unwanted fat removal or Liposuction is becoming more and more favourite among the people!

Everybody wants to look fit and healthy. Being overweight can be a factor of embarrassment and may be a social stigma. Obese (overweight) people when stigmatized, may even feel a bit low on confidence! Hence, to get rid of this embarrassment and in order to look presentable, such people seek for Liposuction/ Fat Removal treatment.

Let's find out more about this ' Liposuction' treatment:

What exactly is Liposuction?

The literary meaning of the term “ Liposuction” is removal of fat from the body with help of suction. At the time of this procedure, thin, small, blunt-tipped tubes (cannula) are inserted through small incisions (cuts) in the skin. The doctor moves the tubes around under the skin to direct at specific fat deposits. The fat is thus suctioned out through these tubes.

Non-surgical Liposuction: A substitute to surgical liposuction wherein different technologies are used to liquefy fat using non-invasive methods like lasers, ultrasonics and injections of chemical agents.

With the advent of newer modern and improved techniques/ methods, Liposuction has become much easier, safer and less painful. These modern techniques are as following:

- **Tumescent Liposuction:** The area where the tube is to be inserted, a local anesthetic is used for numbing that particular area from where the fat is to be suctioned out. After that, a large amount of an anesthetic solution consisting of epinephrine and lidocaine is injected into the fatty tissue before suctioning out the fat. General anesthesia may not be required in this kind of procedure.
- **Ultrasound-assisted Liposuction:** In this method, ultrasound is used for liquefying the fat, thus making the fat removal easier. This kind of technique may prove beneficial in case of removing fat from the sides, upper abdomen and back.
- **Laser-assisted Liposuction:** In this method, low-energy waves are utilized for liquification of the fat, which is then removed with the help of a small cannula.

The procedure is generally carried out as an outpatient procedure in a properly equipped Doctor's office, surgical center or a hospital. Only when a large amount of fat is required to be removed from the body, an overnight hospital stay would be needed. In such a case, a deep sedation or general anesthesia with a local anesthetic may be administered.

## Why is it done?

The chief motive behind Liposuction is to re-shape one or more regions in your body and NOT to reduce body weight. The “ problem” areas which do not react to diet and exercise, are tackled by carrying out Liposuction. These areas are namely – the outer thighs and hips in case of female and the waist and the back in case of men. Also, the areas that are generally treated using Liposuction are – the face, neck, back, abdomen, upper arms, legs and buttocks.

Liposuction may at times be carried out along with certain other Cosmetic Surgery procedures viz. “ Tummy tuck” (Abdominoplasty), Face-Lift or Breast Reduction.

A few clinical conditions may be treated with the help of Liposuction, which include the following:

- Abnormal enlargement of the male breasts (Gynecomastia or Pseudogynecomastia)
- Benign fatty tumours (Lipomas)
- Excessive sweating in the armpits (Axillary hyperhidrosis)
- Problems with fat metabolism in the body (Lipodystrophy)

Liposuction is not used to get rid of Obesity. It will NOT help to clear out cellulite or stretch marks.

## What to anticipate after the treatment?

- After the procedure has been carried out, the treated area is tightly wrapped in order to diminish swelling, pain and bruising.

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- Elastic bandages and tape, a special girdle or some type of fitting garment may be used, based on the area that has been treated.
- The patient may need to wear the compression garment for about 3-4 weeks.
- At least for the first 7-10 days, a lot of bruising and swelling is expected to occur.
- The fluid may evacuate from the site of incision for a few days.
- The patient may be prescribed antibiotics to reduce the risk of infection.
- After the procedure has finished, and the effect of anesthesia and sedation has been subsided, most of the patients may resume their daily activities as and when they feel comfortable.
- In case of larger areas undergoing liposuction, recovery may take a bit longer.

#### Outcomes of the Surgery:

- When carried out in small regions on the body, Liposuction may give out the best desired results. But in case where a person regains weight after undergoing the procedure, the fatty bulges that were removed earlier are most likely to reappear or appear in another place.
- There may be quite notable changes observed in the body contour immediately after the surgery.
- It may take several months to a year for the full effects of the surgery to show up.
- Liposuction does not necessarily tighten the skin around the treated region. After the fat removal has been done, the skin around that

region may become a bit loose. For the skin to tighten, it may take up to 6 months.

- In case of young people, skin retraction is faster.

Every surgical procedure has its own advantages and disadvantages. And when it comes to Cosmetic Surgery, it's no different! There are some risks that are involved with the procedure of Liposuction. Let's have a look as to what complications may arise after the Fat Removal Surgery:

If Liposuction is carried out by an experienced Cosmetic Surgeon in a well equipped surgical setup, it is usually safe. In cases, where a larger amount of area or more than one area have undergone the surgery, the chances of complications arising are more.

- Bruising, swelling (which is temporary), numbness and soreness in and around the region treated
- Minor scarring and irritation at the site of insertion of cannula
- Rippling or baggy skin

Certain less common risks include:

- Uneven skin surface over the region treated
- Permanent change in colour of the skin
- Damage to the skin and the nerves, particularly in case of Ultrasound-assisted Liposuction

It is very important for people to be careful and not gain extra weight after the surgery. As it may result in fat deposition in certain other parts which are deep inside the body, such as the internal organs like heart, liver etc. Such type of fat deposition can be more fatal.

Dangerous risks include:

- Blood clots or fat clots, which may travel to the lungs (Pulmonary embolism)
- Excessive blood or fluid loss which may result in Shock
- Pulmonary edema – fluid accumulation in the lungs
- Toxic reaction to injected solution, particularly in cases when larger areas are treated.

People who have severe heart problems, or blood clotting disorders or pregnant females should NOT undergo Liposuction procedure.

Things to note:

Liposuction is NOT a mean for reducing weight and it is never an alternative to exercise and a balanced diet. As a matter of fact, most of the Cosmetic Surgeons are of the opinion that the best candidates to undergo Liposuction would be healthy people who are at or very close to a healthy weight but who have stubborn fat deposit which does not respond well to exercise.

Liposuction should be carried out only by an experienced Cosmetic Surgeon who is well-trained in Liposuction and knows well how to tackle the complications during surgery.