



Learn Abdominoplasty (Tummy Tuck): Risks, Recovery

Description

Abdominoplasty, also known as a “tummy tuck,” is cosmetic or reconstructive surgery. It is used to tighten slack or divided muscles caused by pregnancy, as well as to remove fat and superfluous skin from the belly following major weight loss. In the majority of cases, abdominoplasty will:



- Restore damaged or divided muscles,
- prevent itching and skin infections caused by extra skin
- adjust the contour and tone of the belly to create a firmer and smoother profile

Abdominoplasty is not a replacement for dieting or exercise. Following a balanced diet and exercising consistently might occasionally result in a flatter stomach without surgery, but this is not always the case. Many doctors advise that abdominoplasty be considered only when dieting and training result in the proper body shape beneath.

If you are self-conscious about your appearance or considering cosmetic treatments to increase your confidence, there are options. These may involve making lifestyle adjustments or speaking with a counselor or psychologist to assist you in overcoming your self-consciousness about your appearance.

Law changes affecting cosmetic treatments

The Health Services Act 1988 was amended in 2018 to govern any surgery, including cosmetic surgery.

The modifications stated that:

- All surgery must be performed in a licensed private hospital or day procedure center.
- Liposuction with anesthesia, including intravenous sedation and anything more than a mild dose of local anesthesia, must be performed in a licensed private hospital or day surgery center.

This implies that in Victoria, it is now unlawful to:

Any surgery (including cosmetic surgery) to be conducted in unregistered facilities anesthesia (other than minimal dosages of local anesthesia) to be administered at an unregistered institution

How can I determine whether a facility or healthcare establishment is registered?

- You can check to see if a facility is registered by:
- Check the Department of Health's page on Private Hospitals
- Call the Department's Private Hospitals Unit at (03) 9096 2164 and ask to see the facility's registration certificate (this is usually on display in a prominent place where consumers can see it quickly).

You can also contact the unit if you suspect illegal behavior or have questions about liposuction, cosmetic surgery, or anesthetic

Things to think about before having an abdominoplasty

Some key considerations to make before deciding on abdominoplasty include:

- Abdominoplasty results are considered permanent.
- However, any significant weight fluctuations following surgery may alter your appearance.
- Postpone the procedure if you intend to lose a substantial amount of weight or are considering future pregnancies.
- Although stretch marks in the treated area will be removed along with extra skin, abdominoplasty is not considered a stretch mark treatment.
- Consider the financial implications. Medicare and Private health insurance may cover some fees, but you can expect out-of-pocket payments.

Inquire with your doctor about any out-of-pocket expenses you may incur and whether you are eligible for a rebate.

- Smokers are more likely to experience difficulties from any procedure. To reduce the likelihood of these issues and to improve your overall health and well-being, attempt to quit smoking before

undergoing surgery.

Consider seeking a second opinion from another medical professional. Before deciding on abdominoplasty, gathering as much information as possible is critical.

Locating a Qualified Medical Professional

Inquire with your primary care physician (GP) about locating a reputable medical practitioner or hospital where abdominoplasty can be performed. In your initial consultation, inquire about the medical practitioner's training and experience. This surgery should be performed by a medical practitioner who has received special training in abdominoplasty and has extensive expertise with this procedure. Request to examine the practitioner's certificates proving their qualification to do this specialized surgery.

Your present medical condition and abdominoplasty

If you are thinking about getting an abdominoplasty, you should talk to your doctor about your present medical situation.

This involves talking about:

- Your physical health includes your past medical history, such as diseases, illnesses, surgeries, and immunizations, as well as your present physical state, which provides for your diet and exercise regimen.
- This is a perfect moment for your doctor to check your blood pressure, temperature, heart rate/rhythm, oxygen saturation, and respiration rate.
- Your mental health – any mental diseases or challenges you may be experiencing, as well as the medications you are now taking, including vitamins and supplements
- previous medication responses
- Any allergies you might have

As a consequence of this conversation, your doctor will be able to estimate the risks and potential complications of the procedure for you. They will also be able to inform you what preparations you will need to make to guarantee a smooth recovery from surgery.

What happens during abdominoplasty surgery?

Like all other surgeries, abdominoplasty must be conducted in a certified and accredited facility. A registered anesthesiologist must be present to treat you if you have a terrible response to the anesthesia. Check the AHPRA website to see if your anesthesiologist is registered.

Abdominoplasty is classified into two types:

- Full abdominoplasty removes excess skin and tightens underlying muscles across the abdominal area, including around the navel.
- Partial abdominoplasty eliminates extra skin below the navel and tightens only the lower

abdominal muscles.

The procedure is usually carried out under general anesthesia. The operation's length will be determined by the extent of the surgery, although it could take up to three hours.

In general, a full abdominoplasty entails:

- The medical practitioner makes a horizontal, curving incision (cut) around the pubic hairline, running from one hip to the other.
- The skin and fatty tissue are separated from the deeper tissue.
- The doctor sews up and strengthens loose or divided abdominal muscles.
- Excess fat is eliminated.
- The excess skin is removed.
- The navel has been relocated.
- Stitches, tape, or clips are used to close the wounds.

All surgery must be performed in licensed and accredited facilities under the supervision of a registered anesthesiologist.

Immediately the following abdominoplasty

Following the surgery, you can expect:

- A drain in the wound to help prevent fluid buildup,
- bruising and swelling,
- numbness in the skin between the navel and the wound, pain and discomfort,
- inability to stand up straight,
- to begin with, a 'tugging' sensation at your abdomen
- dressings or bandages on your abdomen
- a compression garment to help keep the swelling down

Potential Abdominoplasty Complications

Every surgery involves some level of risk. The following are some of the potential problems of abdominoplasty:

- Wound infection that may necessitate antibiotic therapy, pain and discomfort around the incision areas
- Hematoma (an collection of blood around the surgical site that may require drainage) (an accumulation of blood around the surgical area that may require drainage)
- Scars that are obvious and prominent, such as keloid and hypertrophic scars – are elevated, thickened scars that occur over healed incisions.
- Numbness around operated sites – in most cases, this is temporary and will improve over time
- areas of skin that do not heal and may require a skin graft
- difficulty bending forward due to tightened skin
- excess fluid accumulation under the skin (seroma) around an operated site

- which may necessitate one or more needle drainage procedures the need for a blood transfusion (in the unlikely event of a large amount of blood loss during surgery)
- Blood clots, which can be fatal if they travel to the lungs, nausea and vomiting caused by the general anesthesia

This is not an exhaustive list. Other issues may be raised due to your medical history or lifestyle. Obese patients who have had abdominoplasty, for example, are more prone to have a chest infection. For more information, consult your physician.

Self-care at Home Following Abdominoplasty

Follow the advice of your doctor, but here are some general self-care ideas:

- Rest as much as possible and follow all wound-care instructions.
- For at least one month, avoid excessive exercise or heavy lifting.
- Report any bleeding, severe discomfort, or odd symptoms to your doctor.

Your doctor may suggest you do the following:

- To prevent deep vein thrombosis, use compression stockings on your legs for seven to ten days following the operation.
- Wear a compression garment over the surgical site for several weeks.

Long-term prognosis after abdominoplasty

You should be aware that undergoing an abdominoplasty will not prevent you from gaining weight in the future. Scarring is permanent but will fade over time. Be patient; it could take a year or so. Some puckering on the scar's outer edge may remain.

Abdominoplasty alternatives

- Other alternatives include:
- Eating a low-fat, healthful diet
- Frequent exercise wearing foundation garments to flatten the belly area
- talking to a counselor or psychologist – this may help you overcome your self-consciousness about your look

Category

1. Lifestyle

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