



Care after liposuction Part 3 of 3

This leaflet explains what to expect after liposuction. **It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please initial each page** to show that you have read it. For information on the surgery, and the risks and complications of liposuction, please see parts 1 and 2.

What to expect after the operation

Liposuction is usually carried out under a general anesthetic (so you would be asleep) or a local anesthetic (where an area is numbed with injections). You could have an epidural (an injection in the back that numbs the nerves in the whole area) if the treatment is in the lower part of the body, but a local anaesthetic alone is only suitable for small areas. The operation usually takes between one and three hours, depending on the size of the area being treated.

You might be given antibiotics to keep the wound clean.

You might go home the same day as the liposuction, or stay in hospital overnight. If you do go home on the same day, a responsible adult should stay with you for the night.

Simple painkillers should be enough to keep you comfortable. You may also be given compression stockings to wear, to reduce the risk of a blood clot in the leg or the lung.

Dressings

You will have some small dressings on the cuts that were made. Tight bandages or compression garments will reduce swelling and help the body adapt to its new shape. Compression garments should be worn both day and night, except when showering, for at least two weeks, and then during the day for another four to six weeks.



After liposuction, you must wear a snug compression garment around your lower body to reduce swelling.

Page 1 of 3

Please bring this form with you on the day of surgery.

You can get further information and copies of this form from the website at www.baaps.org.uk

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Recovery

You will be out of bed on the same day as your surgery. Rest for a few days to allow the fluid in the area you had treated to be absorbed.

If you only had a small amount of fat removed, you should be able to return to work within a few days. However, you may need extra time off if the liposuction was more extensive.

You should be back to normal exercise in three to four weeks. Avoid strenuous activity for 10 to 12 weeks. With all activities, start gently.

Do not drive until you feel safe and are comfortable wearing a seatbelt. Check your insurance documents if you are not sure.

You can expect considerable bruising which will be uncomfortable and painful at times. The larger the area treated, the greater the pain will be. The bruising will usually be visible for about a month, but the lumpiness and swelling of deep bruising can take up to six months to disappear, particularly if your tummy or ankles have been treated.

As swelling can take a long time to go down, you may not see the full benefit of the liposuction for up to six months. Rarely, a greyish stripe can discolour the skin for several months. This is more common when the ankles have been treated.

If you have a tendency to be anaemic, or if you have had a large area treated, you may need to take iron tablets for a month.

Seeing the results

At first you will feel swollen and look bruised. This should settle down within one to six months and reveal your final shape. The effects of the liposuction should be long lasting if you keep your weight stable.

Your aftercare

To protect your body, and get the best result, look after yourself.

Avoid vigorous activities after your operation.

Protect your wounds as you are told to.

Putting on weight or being pregnant will affect the results.

Page 2 of 3

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Maintain a healthy weight and level of exercise.

What to look out for

Bleeding after surgery can cause swelling, a change in colour, and pain, usually just on one side. The signs of an infection are pain, redness, swelling and pus in the wound, and you may also have a temperature.

A blood clot on the leg can cause swelling and pain in the calf. If the clot goes to the lung, you might be breathless or have pain in your chest. If the wound is not healing well, it may be sore and weep.

If you have any worries after your operation, speak to a doctor or go to A&E.

Important contact details for your surgery

Disclaimer

This document is designed to give you useful information. It is not advice on your specific needs and circumstances. It does not replace the need for you to have a thorough consultation, so you should get advice from a suitably qualified medical practitioner. We – The BAAPS and BAPRAS – have no liability for any decision you make about the surgery you decide to have.

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