

# **LIPOSUCTION INFORMATION SHEET**

## **(SUCTION-ASSISTED LIPECTOMY SURGERY)**

## **(ULTRASOUND-ASSISTED LIPECTOMY SURGERY)**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

This document has been prepared to help inform you concerning suction-assisted lipectomy and ultrasound lipectomy (“liposuction”) surgery, its risks, and alternative treatment.

It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please initial each page indicating that you have read the page. .

### **INTRODUCTION**

Liposuction is a surgical technique to remove unwanted deposits of fat from specific areas of the body, including the face and neck, upper arms, trunk, abdomen, buttocks, hips and thighs, and the knees, calves, and ankles. This is not a substitute for weight reduction, but a method for removing localized deposits of fatty tissue that do not respond to diet or exercise. Liposuction may be performed as a primary procedure for body contouring or may be combined with other surgical techniques such as facelift, abdominoplasty, or thigh lift procedures to tighten loose skin and supporting structures.

The best candidates for liposuction are individuals of relatively normal weight who have excess fat in particular body areas. Having firm, elastic skin will **tend to** result in a better final contour after liposuction.

Hanging **or excess** skin will not reshape itself to the new contours and may require additional surgical techniques to remove **or tighten it**. Body-contour irregularities due to structures other than fat cannot be improved by this technique. Liposuction itself will not improve areas of dimpled skin known as “cellulite”.

Suction-assisted lipectomy surgery is performed by using a hollow metal surgical instrument known as a cannula that is inserted through small skin incision(s) and is passed back and forth through the area of fatty deposit. The cannula is attached to a vacuum source, which provides the suction needed to remove the fatty tissue.

In some situations, a special cannula may be used that emits laser energy to break down fatty deposits. This technique is known as laser assisted liposuction. Depending on your needs your surgeon may recommend suction-assisted lipectomy alone, or in combination with laser-assisted liposuction.

There are a variety of different techniques used for liposuction and care following surgery.

Liposuction will be performed under local anaesthesia. **Tumescent liposuction technique** involves the infiltration of fluid containing dilute local anaesthetic and epinephrine into areas of fatty deposits. This technique can reduce discomfort at the time of surgery, as well as reduce post-operative bruising.

Support garments and dressing are worn **after the procedure** to **help** control swelling and **to** promote healing.

### **ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT**

Alternative forms of management consist of not treating the areas of fatty deposits. Diet and exercise regimens **will usually** be of benefit in the overall reduction or excess body fat.

Direct removal of excess skin and fatty tissue may be necessary in addition to liposuction in some patients. Risks and potential complications are associated with alternative forms of treatment that involve surgery.

## **RISKS of LIPOSUCTION SURGERY**

Every surgical procedure involves a certain amount of risk, and it is important that you understand the risks involved with liposuction. Although the majority of patients do not experience complications, you should discuss each of them with your surgeon to make sure you understand the risks, potential complications, and consequences of liposuction.

*Despite all efforts to reduce risks from cosmetic surgery, complications can happen and may result in poor surgical outcome despite treatment.*

It is not possible to show all potential risks in this information sheet. There may be risks that are particularly important to you which are not listed. You should ensure you raise these with your surgeon when discussing the proposed course of treatment. Shown below are the more frequently occurring risks:

**Patient selection** – Individuals with poor skin tone, medical problems, obesity, or unrealistic expectations may not be **good** candidates for liposuction.

**Bleeding** – It is possible, though unusual, to have a bleeding episode during or after surgery. Should post-operative bleeding occur, it may require emergency treatment to drain accumulated blood or require a blood transfusion. Do not take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for seven days before surgery, as this may increase the risk of bleeding.

**Infection** – An infection is quite unusual after this type of surgery. Should an infection occur, treatment including antibiotics or additional surgery may be necessary. **Rarely, an infection can lead to a poor cosmetic outcome.**

**Skin scarring** – Although good wound healing after a surgical procedure is expected, abnormal scars may occur within the skin and deeper tissues. Scars may be unattractive and of a different colour than **the** surrounding skin. Additional treatments, including surgery, may be needed to **attempt to** treat abnormal scarring.

**Change in skin sensation** – A temporary decrease in skin sensation after liposuction may occur. This usually resolves over a period of time. Diminished (or complete loss of skin sensation) infrequently occurs and may not totally resolve.

**Skin discoloration/swelling** – Skin discoloration and swelling normally occurs following liposuction. In rare situations, swelling and skin discoloration may persist for long periods of time. Permanent skin discoloration is rare.

**Skin contour irregularities** – Contour irregularities and depressions in the skin may occur after liposuction. Visible and palpable wrinkling of skin can occur. Additional treatments including surgery may be necessary to **attempt to** treat skin contour irregularities following liposuction.

**Asymmetry** – It may not be possible to achieve symmetrical body appearance from liposuction surgery. Factors such as skin tone, bony prominence, and muscle tone may contribute to normal asymmetry in body features.

**Seroma** – Fluid accumulations infrequently occur in areas where liposuction has been performed. Additional treatments or surgery to drain accumulations of fluid may be necessary.

**Tumescent liposuction** – There is the possibility that large volumes of fluid containing dilute local anaesthetic drugs and epinephrine that is injected into fatty deposits during surgery may contribute to fluid overload or systemic reaction to these medications. Additional treatment including hospitalization may be necessary.

**Other** – You may be disappointed with the results of surgery. Infrequently, it is necessary to perform additional surgery to **attempt to improve your results**.

**Surgical anaesthesia** – local anaesthesia involves risk. There is the possibility of complication, injury, and even death from all forms of surgical anaesthesia or sedation.

**Allergic reaction** – In rare cases, allergies to tape, suture material, or topical preparations have been reported. Systemic reactions which are more serious may occur due to drugs used during surgery and prescription medicine. Allergic reactions may require additional treatment.

**Surgical shock** – In rare circumstances, liposuction can cause severe trauma, particularly when multiple or extensive areas are suctioned at one time. Although serious complications are infrequent, infections or excessive fluid loss can lead to severe illness and even death. Should surgical shock occur after liposuction, hospitalization and additional treatment would be necessary.

**Pulmonary complications** – Fat embolism syndrome occurs when fat droplets are trapped in the lungs. This is a very rare and possibly fatal complication of suction-assisted lipectomy. Should fat embolism or other pulmonary complications occur, additional treatment including hospitalization may be necessary.

**Skin loss** – Skin loss is very rare after liposuction. Additional treatments including surgery may be **necessary, and there may be a permanent poor cosmetic outcome**.

**Chronic pain** – Chronic pain and discomfort following liposuction is very rare, **but can occur**.

**Ultrasound-Assisted Lipectomy** – Risks associated with the use of this technique include the above mentioned risks and the following specific risks:

**Burns** – Laser energy may produce burns and tissue damage either at the location where the cannula is inserted into the skin or in other areas if the cannula touches the under-surface of the skin for prolonged periods of time. If burns occur, additional treatment and surgery may be necessary.

**Cannula Fragmentation** – Ultrasonic energy produced within the cannula may cause disintegration (fragmentation) of the surgical instrument. The occurrence and effect of this is unpredictable. Should this occur, additional treatment, including surgery, may be necessary.

**Unknown risks** – The long term effect on tissue and organs to exposure to short-duration, high intensity laser energy is unknown. There is the possibility that additional risk factors of laser assisted liposuction may be discovered.

**Long term effects** – **Subsequent alterations in body contour may occur as the result of aging, weight loss or gain, pregnancy, or other circumstances not related to liposuction.**

## **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Most health insurance companies exclude coverage for cosmetic surgical operations such as liposuction or any complications that might occur from surgery. Please carefully review your health insurance subscriber-information pamphlet.

## **ADDITIONAL SURGERY NECESSARY**

There are many variable conditions in addition to risk and potential surgical complication that may influence the long term result from liposuction. Even though risks and complications occur infrequently, the risks cited **above** are particularly associated with liposuction. Other complications and risks can occur but are even more uncommon. Should complications occur, additional surgery or other treatments may be necessary. The practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science.

Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The cost of surgery involves several charges for the services provided. The Total includes fees charged by your doctor, the cost of surgical supplies, laboratory test, anaesthesia, and outpatient hospital charges, depending on where the surgery is performed. Depending on whether the cost of surgery is covered by an insurance plan, you will be responsible for necessary co-payments, deductibles, and charges **not** covered. Additional costs may occur should complications develop from the surgery. Secondary surgery or hospital day surgery charges involved with revisionary surgery would also be your responsibility.

## **ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES:**

**Deep Venous Thrombosis, Cardiac and Pulmonary Complications:** Surgery, especially longer procedures, may be associated with the formation of, or increase in, blood clots in the venous system. Pulmonary complications may occur secondarily to blood clots (pulmonary emboli), fat deposits (fat emboli) or partial collapse of the lungs after general anaesthesia. Pulmonary and fat emboli can be life threatening or fatal in some circumstances. Air travel, inactivity and other conditions may increase the incidence of blood clots travelling to the lungs causing a major blood clot that may result in death. It is important to discuss with your **surgeon** any past history of blood clots or swollen legs that may contribute to this condition. Cardiac complications are a risk with any surgery and anaesthesia, even in patients without symptoms. If you experience shortness of breath, chest pain or unusual heartbeats, seek medical attention immediately. Should any of these complications occur, you might require hospitalization and additional treatment.

**Smoking, Second-Hand Smoke Exposure, Nicotine Products (Patch, Gum, Nasal Spray):** Patients who are currently smoking, use tobacco products, or nicotine products (patch, gum or nasal spray) are at a greater risk for significant surgical complications of skin dying, delayed healing and additional scarring. Individuals exposed to second-hand smoke are also at potential risk for similar complications attributable to nicotine exposure. Additionally, smokers may have a significant negative effect on anaesthesia and recovery from anaesthesia, with coughing and possibly increased bleeding.

It is important to refrain from smoking at least 6 weeks before surgery and until your physician states

it is safe to return, if desired.

**Female Patient Information:** It is important to inform your surgeon if you use birth control pills, oestrogen replacement, or if you believe you may be pregnant. Many medications including antibiotics may neutralize the preventive effect of birth control pills, allowing for conception and pregnancy.

**Intimate Relations After Surgery:** Surgery involves coagulating of blood vessels and increased activity of any kind may open these vessels leading to a bleed, or hematoma. Increased activity that increased your pulse or heart rate may cause additional bruising, swelling and the need for return to surgery and control of bleeding. It is wise to refrain from sexual activity until your physician states it is safe.

**Medications:** There are many adverse reactions that occur as the result of taking over the counter, herbal, and/or prescription medications. Be sure to check with your physician about any drug interactions that may exist with medications that you are already taking. If you have an adverse reaction, stop the drugs immediately and call your plastic surgeon for further instructions. If the reaction is severe, go immediately to the nearest emergency room. When taking the prescribed pain medications after surgery, realize that they can affect your thought process. Do not drive, do not operate complex equipment, do not make any important decisions and do not drink any alcohol while taking these medications. Be sure to take your prescribed medication only as directed.

## **PATIENT COMPLIANCE**

Follow all physician instructions carefully; this is essential for the success of your outcome. It is important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, swelling, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Personal and vocational activity needs to be restricted. Protective dressings and drains should not be removed unless instructed by your surgeon. Successful post-operative function depends on both surgery and subsequent care. Physical activity that increases your pulse or heart rate may cause bruising, swelling, fluid accumulation around implants and the need for the return to surgery. It is important that you participate in follow-up care, return for aftercare, and promote your recovery after surgery.