

FAQ's: COSMETIC SURGERY

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Smartlipo®

HOW DOES SMARTLIPO™ WORK?

This laser-assisted lipolysis procedure is performed using a one millimeter cannula (or tube) inserted into the skin. A laser fiber inside of the cannula delivers energy directly to fat cells, causing them to rupture and drain away as liquid. Simultaneously, tissue around the area coagulates, resulting in overall tighter skin tissue.

WHAT AREA OF THE BODY CAN BE TREATED?

Smartlipo™ is ideal for the neck, jaw-line, arms, breasts, “bra fat,” abdomen, “love handles,” “saddle bags,” inner and outer thighs and knees.

AM I A CANDIDATE?

Smartlipo™ is meant for areas that do not respond to diet or exercise. The perfect candidate is in good health and of normal body weight.

HOW DOES SMARTLIPO™ COMPARE TO CONVENTIONAL LIPOSUCTION?

Conventional liposuction is meant to remove greater amounts of fat. However, since this can leave behind unsightly pockets of skin, laser assisted lipolysis is often a perfect compliment.

IS THERE A RECOVERY PERIOD?

Smartlipo™ is minimally invasive procedure, which usually requires only local anesthesia. Some light trauma can occur, but you will be able to return to work in a couple of days and resume exercise after 2 weeks.

HOW MANY TREATMENTS ARE REQUIRED?

Typically only one treatment is required. Results can be seen within a week, with continued improvement over 3 to 6 months. A compression garment may be worn for a short period after treatment, depending on the body area treated.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SMARTLIPO™?

- Treats unwanted fat and fat tissue irregularities
- Promotes tissue coagulation resulting in skin tissue tightening
- Treats flabby or lax skin and areas of high vascularity
- Minimal edema and bleeding due to the laser's hemostatic properties
- Minimal bruising
- Causes less trauma and faster healing time than traditional liposuction

IS SMARTLIPO™ APPROVED BY THE FDA?

The Smartlipo has been cleared by the FDA for laser-assisted lipolysis. It is also cleared for incision, vaporization, ablation and coagulation of soft tissue.

Lipoabdominoplasty (Tummy Tuck)

ARE ABDOMINOPLASTY AND LIPOSUCTION SURGERIES RECOMMENDED WEIGHT LOSS PROCEDURES?

Weight loss surgery alone is not recommended, although combined with diet, exercise and living healthy, it can provide an important factor in obtaining and maintaining healthier look.

WHAT ARE THE MOST FREQUENTLY TREATED AREAS OF THE BODY?

Women's most frequently treated areas are the outer thighs, and the stomach. In men it is those love handles that they want to reduce.

HOW IS THE LIPOABDOMINOPLASTY DONE?

After the administration of the tumescent anesthesia, liposuction is carried out in the upper and lower abdomen, waist and love handles if needed. Dr. Schilling makes a lower skin incision and elevates the skin and fat off of the underlying muscles. The abdominal muscles are tightened with a pleating type stitch with permanent suture. The excess and loose skin is removed. Occasionally, the umbilicus (belly button) is relocated to its natural position with sutures. Soft drains are placed under the skin in some circumstances. The incisions are carefully closed with dissolving sutures buried beneath the skin. Firm bandages and an abdominal binder are applied which helps postoperative swelling and decreases the formation of fluid pockets under the skin called hematomas or seromas.

CAN THE FAT THAT WAS REMOVED GROW BACK?

When fat cells have been removed by liposuction these same cells do not grow back. Weight gain is the actual enlargement of existing fat cells, not the creation of new ones. The patients' new silhouette should be long lasting or permanent following the proper diet and exercise. If weight is gained it will be distributed more proportionately over the entire body.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HAVING AN ABDOMINOPLASTY OR LIPOSUCTION SURGERY?

There are always certain risks when having any type of surgery. Both of these surgeries are considered very safe and effective, with most patients walking away satisfied with their results. Although complications are uncommon, some may experience infection, bleeding or nerve damage.

WHAT KIND OF ANESTHESIA IS USED FOR LIPOABDOMINOPLASTY?

Dr. Schilling uses an anesthetic technique called tumescent local anesthesia and thus avoids general anesthesia and its attendant risks. Tumescent liposuction and abdominoplasty is now recognized worldwide as the technique permitting the greatest safety, the most rapid recovery and the least pain. There are surgeons who prefer to simultaneously use general anesthesia and the tumescent technique. Some surgeons rely on general anesthesia because they do not have the skill to achieve complete anesthesia with the tumescent technique. Others recommend general anesthesia just because they prefer patients to be unconscious. Still others use general anesthesia because it permits the surgery to be completed more rapidly. However the use of general anesthesia should not be based on what is most convenient for the surgeon, but rather what is best for the patient. Ultimately, the patient should choose the type of anesthesia.

CAN EXERCISE TIGHTEN THE SKIN WITHOUT ABDOMINOPLASTY?

Unfortunately no. Exercise is good for the mind and body in general, and toning the muscles can help fill out loose skin in the vicinity. By suppressing the appetite, and by slightly increasing the metabolism, exercise can assist weight loss. But there is no such thing as a "spot" exercise, to make the body lose weight in a certain area, nor to make the skin tighter. Exercise can increase muscle bulk, and that in turn can make skin look tighter in some areas, but exercise cannot tighten the loose abdominal skin. To date, only surgery can accomplish that.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER THE PROCEDURE?

Tummy tuck surgery or abdominoplasty is performed in our office surgical suite as an outpatient procedure so you can go home the same day. You may shower 24 hours after the surgery. Occasionally, Dr. Schilling places drains underneath the skin in the fatty layer to collect old blood and serum; these will be removed in a week or so when the drainage is less than 30 cc in one day.

Plan to take it easy for the two to three weeks after surgery. You will be asked to avoid strenuous lifting (over 30 pounds), exercise, sports, baths, hot tubs or swimming of any kind until the incisions have healed over completely,

You will be advised to wear an abdominal binder or compression garment for 4-6 weeks. Dr. Schilling will see you at one, two and four weeks after the procedure or anytime if there could be a problem or concern.

WHAT IF I SMOKE?

Any patient who smokes is high risk for any surgery because of serious wound healing problems and less than desirable scar formation. You should stop smoking a minimum of one week prior to your procedure or quit altogether.

IS ABDOMINOPLASTY A GOOD WAY TO LOSE WEIGHT?

No, abdominoplasty is not a good method for weight loss. Not only is it less effective for people who are obese, but also the results are less than ideal, and there are increased risks for the significantly overweight person. The best candidates are those who have attained their correct body weight, and yet still have the abdominal problems, which do not respond to further weight loss or exercise.

DOES ABDOMINOPLASTY TAKE CARE OF CELLULITE?

There is nothing mystical or special about "cellulite", it is just fat, but it is fat located just under the skin, making a rippled look that is quite apparent. Abdominoplasty removes some of this cellulite fat also, but it is difficult to eliminate entirely. Weight loss by dieting is the best way. Sometimes, these skin irregularities can become more noticeable after abdominoplasty.

DOES ABDOMINOPLASTY TAKE CARE OF STRETCH MARKS?

Stretch marks are scars. They are produced by distension of the skin, but only in situations in which there are various hormones circulating, as in pregnancy and puberty. Those stretch marks located on the lower abdomen will be removed with the extra skin. Those located on the upper abdomen will be shifted downward as the skin is brought downward. The stretch marks that remain are tightened and smoothed out somewhat.

WILL ABDOMINOPLASTY TIGHTEN UP LOOSE SKIN?

Yes, that is one of the main purposes of abdominoplasty.

WHERE ARE THE SCARS AFTER ABDOMINOPLASTY?

There is almost always a low horizontal scar across the lower abdomen just above the hairline. Sometimes there is also a short vertical scar above the pubic area. Depending on how much lax skin is removed it is sometimes necessary to move and re-implant the belly button so there is a scar involved there.

CAN THE PROBLEMS COME BACK AFTER ABDOMINOPLASTY?

Fat cannot come back unless one gains weight again, in which case all body areas will share in the weight gain. However, after abdominoplasty the treated area has a permanently decreased capacity for additional fat, because so many of the fat cells have simply been removed. But there are still fat cells present, so some gain in that area is to be expected with weight gain. Skin stretches with the passage of time, and so as the years go by there will be more skin, and for the same reason the muscles will gradually stretch out again. Nevertheless, a better contour after surgery is in a sense permanent, in that no matter what the person's age, the benefits remain.

IS ABDOMINOPLASTY SURGERY PAINFUL?

Yes, moderately so, because of the tightening of the muscles that is almost always included. All the patients are given strong narcotic pills to take at home, and limit their activities accordingly.

WHAT IS THE RECOVERY PERIOD AFTER ABDOMINOPLASTY?

Recovery time depends on the individual, but usually follows a general pattern. For the first five to seven days, the patients take fairly strong pain medicine. During this time they generally stay at home, and they cannot drive a car or operate machinery. Near the one-week mark, when they are on milder medicine, they can start light exercise, such as walking, treadmill, stationary bike, but not impact exercises like running or aerobics. The second week, weights or exercise machines can be added, and then after three weeks, running and aerobics can be done. The point at which work can be resumed depends upon how the work activities fit into the progression described above.

WHAT IS THE TYPICAL COST OF ABDOMINOPLASTY?

Typically, the cost of an abdominoplasty falls between \$3,000 and \$10,000. A precise estimate of what *your* tummy tuck will cost can only be obtained during a one-on-one patient consultation with Dr. Schilling. Many variables

influence the cost of an abdominoplasty procedure, and there may be several additional costs not calculated in the initial fee.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR ABDOMINOPLASTY SURGERY?

Attend a patient consultation to meet with Dr. Schilling. Tell him about all medications and herbal supplements that you are taking. You will likely have to either decrease or discontinue your dosage of some medications two weeks prior to surgery, he will be able to tell you which medications increase your risk for complications. You will have to quit smoking two weeks before the surgery and remain a non-smoker for two weeks following surgery. Exercise, eat a balanced diet, and get plenty of rest in the weeks leading up to surgery. Follow any instructions Dr. Schilling gives you to the letter.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH TUMMY TUCK SURGERY?

Tummy tuck surgery is generally a safe procedure. If you take proper care in preparing for the surgery and follow instructions regarding post-operative care, the risks are minimal. There is the risk that you will develop an infection, blood clots, or that there will be complications to the healing process. If complications occur, they can usually be treated, but may result in more prominent scarring after surgery.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF ABDOMINOPLASTY?

Abdominoplasty is major surgery, and all surgeries involve side effects. After undergoing a tummy tuck, you will experience some pain and swelling. Dr. Schilling will prescribe medication and give you instructions on how to lessen your discomfort.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TUMMY TUCK SURGERY?

Tummy tuck surgery can improve your appearance and self-confidence. It can also be performed for health reasons if loose skin and weakened abdominal muscles have become a medical issue, as is sometimes the case after massive weight loss.

HOW CAN I MAINTAIN MY FIGURE AFTER UNDERGOING ABDOMINOPLASTY SURGERY?

To maintain the improved figure that accompanies abdominoplasty surgery, it is essential that you exercise routinely and follow a balanced diet. With proper maintenance, you can retain the results of your abdominoplasty for many years following surgery.

Breast Enhancement

Can the breast prosthesis be broken?

The material is very elastic and easily stretched, thus it is difficult to break the implant. Patients have been victims of blunt trauma to the chest ample enough to fracture their ribs, yet did not rupture the prosthesis. This does not imply they absolutely cannot be broken, but it would take a considerable force to break an implant. In the unlikely event it did break, it would have to be replaced.

Does flying affect breast implants?

Flying does not affect the implants. Many flight attendants have implants and fly almost every day.

Can one breast-feed if she has implants?

You would be able to breast-feed but it is not recommended. Theoretically, there might be an increased possibility of developing mastitis (infection in the milk ducts). Repeated engorgement and relaxation can produce a lasting sagging or drooping of the breast. However, if you really feel you want to breast-feed, you may do so with the above facts in mind.

Are patients put to sleep for this surgery?

This is a decision between the patients and the surgeon. 90 percent or more of the procedures are done under conscious sedation anesthesia which is preferable.

Why do some breast implants develop firmness?

An unusually thick capsule of scar tissue that forms around the implant causes the firmness. Some scarring is expected and necessary to maintain the position of implant. Some people form thicker scars than others do. The newer implants seem to cause less scar formation. Sometimes it is advisable to manually break up the capsule of scar tissue. Rarely does an implant have to be replaced.

Can a person go bra-less after breast implants are placed?

Certainly, if inclined to do so. However, a bra should be worn during jogging, running, tennis, horseback riding, and any other time the breast might get jostled.

Can breast implants cause breast cancer?

It is our opinion at this time, based on many studies, that breast augmentation does not cause cancer of the breast, yet an augmentation will not prevent cancer from developing.

Can breast lumps be detected if one has implants?

When implants are present, breast lumps can be felt more easily since the breast tissue is being pushed forward, stretching the skin and subcutaneous fat and making the lump less elusive. Mammograms are more difficult to interpret after augmentation but can be supplemented with ultrasound when necessary. It is still important to get mammograms regularly after age 40. Any lump that develops needs to be diagnosed. Most breast lumps are benign.

If you have other questions and concerns, be sure to ask Dr. Schilling.

Fat Grafting

WHAT IS FAT GRAFTING?

Fat grafting is a cosmetic procedure where your own fat is used to rejuvenate the face, augment the cheeks or buttocks, or correct problems such as hollowness around the eyes or acne scars. Many people lose facial fat as they age and develop a hollow or gaunt look. Fat grafting can be used to correct this and give a younger, more refreshed look. Fat grafting is also referred to as free fat transfer. Some of the fat re-implanted is reabsorbed within a few months, but some of the augmentation will be permanent.

AT WHAT AGE CAN FAT GRAFTING BE PERFORMED?

Fat grafting can be performed at any age to help correct deep acne scars or fix a facial asymmetry. For buttock or cheek augmentation, it is usually done anywhere from age 20 up. It is often done on people in their 40's or 50's for correcting the hollowness that can come with age (or to correct the removal of too much facial fat in a previous cosmetic surgery).

WHAT DOES A TYPICAL FAT GRAFTING CONSULTATION ENTAIL?

Dr. Schilling will go over your desires with you and explain your options. He will discuss what can realistically be achieved with fat grafting, discuss with you the risks, and determine the amount of augmentation you will need. The two of you will also discuss your medical history.

HOW IS FAT GRAFTING PERFORMED?

The fat used in fat grafting is taken from elsewhere in your body. This can be done in a liposuction procedure, but a small amount of fat can be taken from the abdomen or elsewhere can be removed and used. This fat is treated to concentrate viable and whole fat cells, which are then carefully re-implanted in the treatment area. The re-implantation is done by injection or using other techniques. This is a simple in-office procedure in most cases and done under local anesthesia. You may have a small incision at the site where the fat was taken if you are not having liposuction there.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT POSTOPERATIVELY?

You can expect to be swollen, a bit bruised, and a little sore both at the treatment site and the donor site. This is normal. You should keep the treatment area as still as possible for the first few days to allow proper healing. Avoid high-impact exercise or activities for the first 2 to 3 weeks, depending upon the extent of the surgery. Dr. Schilling will tell you how to care for the treatment area.

WHEN WILL THE STITCHES BE REMOVED FROM MY DONOR SITE?

Whether you have sutures at all depends on how much fat is being removed, whether you are having liposuction at the same time, and Dr. Schilling's preferences. If you do need sutures, they are usually removed anywhere from 3 to 7 days after the procedure.

WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO SEE THE RESULTS?

You will be a bit swollen at first and it might look like you were too augmented. This is usually just due to the swelling, but some surgeons graft in more fat than immediately needed because some fat is reabsorbed and doesn't last. The swelling will subside and you will usually be able to see your true results in 3 to 4 months, although you may still lose some of the grafted fat after that.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF FAT GRAFTING?

The risks for fat grafting include infection, asymmetry, fatty cysts, hematoma, fat embolism, seroma, and permanent discoloration from the bruises. Most complications are rare.

ARE THE RESULTS PERMANENT?

It depends. There are many factors involved in how long fat grafting lasts; it can be up to 90%.

Vaginal Rejuvenation (Labiaplasty)

WHAT IS LABIAPLASTY?

Labiaplasty also referred to as labiaplasty, is a surgical procedure that will reduce and/or reshape the labia minora - the skin that covers the female clitoris and vaginal opening. In some instances, women with large labia can experience pain during intercourse, or feel discomfort during everyday activities or when wearing tight-fitting clothing. Others may feel unattractive, or wish to enhance their sexual experiences by removing some of the skin that covers the clitoris. The purpose of a labiaplasty is to better define the inner labia. During this procedure the urethral opening can be redefined, and if necessary improvements to the vagina may be made. The problem can be caused by genetics, sexual intercourse or difficulties in childbirth.

Labia Minora (inner lips) Reduction - Many women dislike the large protuberant appearance of their labia minora. This may cause severe embarrassment with a sexual partner. The overly large labia minora can also result in constant irritation in tight pants. Surgical labial reduction can greatly improve the aesthetic appearance of the abnormally enlarged labia's. Some women are born with large labia, others may develop this condition with childbirth or age.

Labia Majora (outer lips) Reduction - This common anatomical variation may be worsened by childbirth or by weight gain or loss. They may sometimes be improved by liposuction. In more severe cases, surgical reduction is necessary.

Vaginoplasty (rejuvenation of the vagina) involves "tightening" and rebuilding of the vaginal muscles and the perineum. Childbirth, (especially multiple), aging, and genetic factors often cause the vaginal muscles to loosen, tear, and weaken. The diameter of the vagina gets bigger and there is a loss of feeling (and pleasure). Vaginoplasty returns the vagina to "pre-pregnancy" state.

For women who have experienced multiple childbirths, vaginal muscles tend to experience enlargement due to stressful expansion during the delivery. The result can often be loose, weak, vaginal muscles. Even after exercise (Kegel), the condition of the vaginal muscles may not improve. Many women find that while the experience of childbirth may be the most rewarding of their lives, sometimes the after effects for both their sexual partner and themselves is not as satisfying as it once was.

Vaginoplasty, sometimes referred to as rejuvenation of the vagina, is a procedure that can usually correct the problem of stretched vaginal muscles resulting from childbirth(s), and is a direct means of enhancing one's sexual life once again. The procedure typically tones vaginal muscle, resulting in greater contraction strength and control, thereby permitting greater sensation during sexual experiences.

Generally, anyone in average physical condition or good health can be a candidate for vaginoplasty surgery.