

# **Liposuction & Tumescent Liposuction**

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Men and women can accumulate excess fat that is not easily removed by exercise and diet. Prior to the 1980's, extensive surgery was usually required to remove stubborn fatty deposits. Treatment was often limited to a few areas of the body, like the abdomen and buttocks. It involved significant risks and a long recovery. Safe procedures for removal of fat from the face, arms, knees, and thighs were not generally available.

### **What is liposuction surgery?**

In the early 1980's, dermatologic surgeons pioneered liposuction techniques to remove undesired fat from nearly all body areas including the face, neck, chin, breast, abdomen, hips, flanks (love handles), back, inner and outer thighs, buttocks, knees, calves, and ankles. Liposuction surgery also emerged as an effective treatment for certain non-cosmetic conditions of fat accumulation, such as lipomas (benign fatty tumors) and enlarged male and female breasts, as well as to decrease excessive sweating under the arms.

### **What is tumescent liposuction?**

Developed by dermatologic surgeons in the mid 1980's, a major advancement called tumescent liposuction completely changed surgical fat removal. This breakthrough technique refers to filling the fatty layer of skin with a diluted solution of local anaesthesia and other medications prior to removing the excess fat. Use of tumescent liposuction allows dermatologic surgeons to safely and efficiently remove both deep and superficial excess layers of fat with little discomfort, more rapid healing, and improved cosmetic results.

### **How is tumescent liposuction performed?**

The procedure involves injecting large volumes of a solution directly into the areas of excessive fatty deposits. The diluted solution usually contains a local anaesthetic and a drug called epinephrine to shrink capillaries and minimize blood loss. After a small incision is made in the skin, a small tube (cannula) connected to a vacuum-like machine is inserted into the fatty layer. Using back and forth movements, the fat is sucked through the tube into a sterile collection system. An elastic compression garment is then worn to help the skin contract and heal. The result is a sculpting of bulging areas into more attractive contours.

### **What are the benefits of local tumescent liposuction?**

Tumescent liposuction using local anaesthesia offers the benefits of fewer skin irregularities, less bleeding, reduced bruising, and a faster recovery. Tumescent liposuction is designed to be performed as an outpatient procedure. Thus, the potential complications from general anaesthesia and a costly hospital stay can be avoided. In addition, since the patient is awake, he or she is able to sit or stand during the procedure, allowing the surgeon to check the status of the patient and progress of the contouring.

### **Why choose a dermatologic surgeon for your liposuction surgery?**

Dermatologic surgeons pioneered the tumescent technique of liposuction that uses local anaesthesia to ensure patient safety. They are trained and experienced in the use of a wide range of surgical, cosmetic, reconstructive, and non-surgical methods to repair and improve the function and appearance of skin anywhere on the body. As skin surgery experts, they are uniquely qualified to treat the fatty layer of skin and are among the Board-certified specialists trained in liposuction during their residency programs.

### **When is liposuction indicated?**

Liposuction is most effective for removing localized fat deposits that do not respond to diet or exercise. Liposuction is not intended as a substitute for weight loss; rather, it is a contouring procedure. It is best utilized in a program of exercise and optimal weight maintenance. The best results are obtained in body areas where there is reasonable muscle tone, good skin elasticity, and fat is not excessive. In cases where there is a significant loss of tone and elasticity, the desired cosmetic results may require a combination of both liposuction and surgical skin tightening to remove the excessive loose tissue.

### **What happens prior to surgery?**

Before surgery, a complete medical history is taken and a physical examination is conducted in order to evaluate the body's condition. During the consultation, the dermatologic surgeon describes the procedure and what results should be expected. The doctor may also review alternative treatment options and will explain the possible risks and complications that may occur. Photographs are frequently taken before and after surgery.

**What happens after surgery?**

The local anaesthesia injected into the tissue remains for about 24 hours following liposuction surgery, greatly minimizing post-operative pain. After tumescent liposuction, most patients are generally alert and able to function without the nausea, grogginess, and the washed out feeling associated with general anaesthesia. In fact, patients are encouraged to walk immediately after surgery to enhance the healing process. Patients can usually return to a desk-type job within a few days. Physical exercise may be resumed three to seven days after the procedure.

**Is tumescent liposuction safe?**

Like all surgery, liposuction carries both benefits and risks. However, when performed by a qualified dermatologic surgeon, tumescent liposuction using local anaesthesia is a remarkably safe procedure with few significant side effects. Infrequent minor complications such as skin irregularity, lumpiness, dimpling, loose skin, numbness, infections, and objectionable scarring (rare) may occur and are usually easily corrected.

**What is power-assisted liposuction?**

Power-assisted or powered tumescent liposuction is the latest advance in fat removal pioneered by dermatologic surgeons. The "power" in the technique refers to the advanced instruments used to perform the surgery. Traditional liposuction is performed manually whereas power-assisted liposuction uses a mechanical cannula that efficiently removes fatty tissue with increased precision, less bruising and a faster healing time. According to medical experts and patients alike, power-assisted liposuction is a gentler technique than traditional liposuction and is preferred by patients. Your dermatologic surgeon can advise you on the best methods to meet your needs.