

Liposuction

Liposuction (or 'lipo') is a surgical procedure designed to reshape the body by removing fatty tissue, from specific body areas. It should not be seen as an alternative to exercise or dieting, but considered where these simple measures fail. Commonly liposucked body parts include the tummy, hips, buttocks, thighs, inner knees and chin. Liposuction can also be part of what is termed fat transfer (liposculpture)- fat removal and then re-injection in other body areas for reshaping.

The surgical procedure

Liposuction is commonly performed under general anaesthetic and very occasionally under local anaesthetic. Mr Misra will explain what type is suitable for you. The operation can last between 1 to 2 hours.

Liposuction starts by injection of a fluid mixture (tumescent fluid), that makes it easier to remove fat and helps reduce post-op bleeding, bruising, swelling and pain.



Figure 1 : Liposuction cannula

A small incision is made in the skin to allow entry of the cannula (about 3mm in diameter- see Figure 1). This is tunneled, under skin, to reach the body area for treatment and attached to suction, which allows for fat removal. Once treated, the extracted fat volume is measured and the incision closed. The procedure is repeated in different directions and for other areas, as needed.

What to expect

On the day of surgery, Mr Misra will re-explain the proposed plan and pen mark your skin, to map out the treatment areas (see Figure 2). Shortly after this, you will be taken to the operating theatre, for your liposuction procedure. Following this, simple dressings are placed over the incision sites and a pressure garment is worn. Following your fully recovery, you will be discharged home and asked to re-attend clinic, for a wound review.

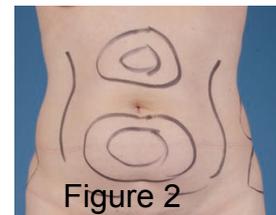


Figure 2

Aftercare

Swelling and bruising are most noticeable in the first week, but can take up to 6-8 weeks to settle. You will be advised to wear your pressure garment, round the clock, for this time. All dressings should be kept dry for the first week to help wound healing. Mr Misra will review you again, at 2 weeks to re-assess your progress.

Risks and complications

Cosmetic surgery is usually undertaken in patients who enjoy good health. However, no surgery is risk-free. Some of the general risks such as DVT (deep vein thrombosis / PE (pulmonary embolus) and chest infection although uncommon, can happen and your risk for will be discussed at consultation. However, specific risks to liposuction surgery are listed below, although not exhaustive:

Damage to anatomical structures

This is rare, with suction assisted liposuction. Depending on the type of structure (skin, organ, blood vessel, nerve) and severity of injury, further surgery may be needed.

Bleeding / seroma

Fluid collections under the skin are more common with larger areas of liposuction. When bleeding occurs (haematoma -not common), depending on its size, surgical drainage may be required. If tissue fluid build-up under the skin (seroma - more common), this can be easily removed by inserting a needle, in the skin, to remove the fluid build up.

Fat / clot embolus

Pieces of fat or clot from a DVT (deep vein thrombosis) may become absorbed into the circulation and gather in the lungs (embolus – pulmonary embolus (PE)). PE is uncommon and fat embolus is rarer. The risk for both, is increased when large volume liposuction is performed and correspondingly longer periods of time in theatre are required.

Body electrolyte imbalances

Massive liposuction (>5 litres of extracted fat) can potentially risk salt imbalances in the blood. Overnight stay and blood level monitoring can detect such changes so it can be treated, using fluid balance. Mr Misra will discuss this with you, if this applies.

Infection

This is occasionally encountered and will proportionally increase the more liposuction is needed. If mild, a short course of antibiotics will usually correct this. In the rare instance of a severe infection, a course of intravenous antibiotics may be needed, with a longer stay in hospital.

Bad scars

The scars from liposuction usually settle very well. Occasionally, however, scars can become sensitive, lumpy or both. It is not always predictable a bad scar will result. Scar massage and a course of steroid injections, may help, once obvious.

Change in sensation

This is very common in the early part of recovery. As the swelling and bruising settle feeling in the skin improves. Full recovery can take up to a year, often depending on the extent of liposuction performed. Massage of the skin and tissues can help with sensory recovery.

Contour irregularity

This is fairly common, but usually subtle, particularly with intensive superficial liposuction. Other reasons for late contour changes are infection and fat necrosis (death of fat cells). A small area of hardening, under the skin, usually means fat necrosis has taken place. If the final result is affected revision surgery may be warranted.

Asymmetry

This is very common, as imbalance is nearly always present, even before the procedure. This will not be corrected by the procedure and is likely to remain.

Revision surgery

The final result, following liposuction, is noticeable by 3-4 months, following the procedure. Bad scarring, contour irregularity or weight change, may mean that further surgery is needed, to get a better result.

Long-lasting result

Liposuction can leave very pleasing results, in the majority of patients and is tolerated well. Body changes in ageing or weight loss / gain will affect the final result. If so, revision surgery may become necessary.

Further information

If you are interested to know more about liposuction, please call: 01753 66571 or email: surgeon@alokmisra.com.

Disclaimer: This information leaflet is designed to supply useful information but is not to be regarded as advice for a specific case. It does not replace the need for a consultation with Mr Misra and in this regard he accepts no liability for any decision taken by the reader in respect of the treatment they decide to undergo.