



Patient Information sheet

Liposuction

Liposuction is a method of removing stubborn areas of fat beneath the skin whose bulk distorts the outline of the body and does not go away with diets. These areas are usually determined by genetics, are hormonally dependant and typically respond only to starvation. Indeed it is believed they are there to protect us from prolonged lean times particularly under early primitive conditions of our evolution.

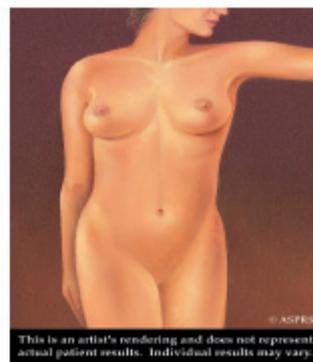
The areas most frequently affected are the thighs, buttocks, abdomen and knees and to a lesser extent the neck, chin and flanks. Liposuction is not a method of weight control but can be used to debulking in some focused areas.

The method finds its best application in removing those areas that are out of character with the rest of the body and under which conditions of starvation are the last to yield and first to return under normal dietary conditions. Small incisions enable a cannula to be inserted subdermally so that a high pressure vacuum can suck localised deposits of fat from the area.

It works by aspiration of fat globules into a small portal in the cannula which is moved gently back and forth so the fat is avulsed and progressively planed down. If the area is small it can be done under local anaesthetic. Larger areas are safer and more comfortable under light anaesthetic as a day stay.

The anaesthetist is another specialist who cares for the patient during the procedure to ensure a safe and speedy recovery. Fluids are replaced at the time of surgery into a vein.

Surgery can take anything from 45 mins to 2-3 hours for the larger areas and is performed at Kensington Hospital, Whangarei. Large volume aspiration is much safer to do in stages than all at once.



A good illustration of the diversity of sites. If they are all well developed then dieting is the first call



An illustration that the profile is the target



OPERATION STAGES

The improvement sought may take more than one stage to achieve. Consideration needs to be given to the blood supply and healing and safety together with speed of recovery. An important technical limitation is that taking too much is hard to fix.

What is done is to take it down to what appears to be the best contour allowing for swelling and local anaesthetic but no further. The best results are achieved with a staged approach separated by enough time to allow full resolution of scars and residual fat settling so that the full complexities and variations of healing are revealed.

The second stage when required is usually a lot smaller than the first unless further areas are involved.

WHAT IS THE RECOVERY PERIOD?

Once discharged from hospital Panadeine is all that is needed for pain relief. A specially ordered compression garment is fitted and worn for around 6 weeks after operation which gives good support making it easier to move around. Recovery is dependent on the areas treated.

For small areas most patients feel comfortable enough to return to work in about 1 week and return to light activities in three weeks. For the larger areas the return to work is in about three or four weeks and activity 6 weeks. Much of this is also age dependent. ALL patients are advised to take it easy for at least 10 days to optimise the conditions for healing

WHAT ARE THE COMPLICATIONS?

Bruising is normal and variable and is much reduced with newer technologies and disappears in around 10 days or so. Scars are tiny and hard to see. Rarely a scar can become indented but it is easily revised under local anaesthetic. Slight numbness and disturbance of sensation in the skin around the area treated is normal and returns within six weeks or so.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

- To reveal all medications, conditions, history, allergies and recreational drug use.
- To understand all aspects of the information discussed at consultation and all written information given and to seek clarification if needed.
- To understand that you are entering a process where your surgeon is dedicated to the best possible outcome. This requires engaging in the complexities of biology, healing and individual differences.
- That additional stages or further surgeries are occasionally required and that the surgeons best efforts are the basis of the charges. Further surgeries will incur additional charges in pursuit of a particular result.
- To understand that the initial consultation is charged for but all subsequent pre operative consultations pertaining to this surgery are at no charge.

- To understand and accept the above conditions.