



Abdominoplasty (Tummy tuck)

What is it?

Abdominoplasty is the removal of excess tissue (skin and fat) from the abdomen. This excess tissue is usually caused by stretching from childbirth or weight loss, or can hang over a scar such as after Caesarean section.

Is Mr Callan experienced at this procedure?

This is an important question to ask. Not only is Mr Callan experienced at this procedure, but he performs abdominoplasty regularly and keeps up to date with the latest techniques. It is also important to know that as a fully trained plastic surgeon Mr Callan performs this procedure to the high standards of Australian Plastic Surgery.

Can I see photographs?

You can see photographs in our office when you have a consultation. As Mr Callan performs abdominoplasty frequently, there are large numbers of photographs to look at many of which will be of patients with a problem similar to yours. We do not publish photographs on the web for a number of reasons, but the most important of these is that you need realistic photographs for the particular type of abdominoplasty you will need.

Who has abdominoplasty?

Women after they have finished having children who are left with excess tissue on the abdomen. Men or women after significant weight loss are also candidates.

Am I suitable?

You need to be sensible, honest about your reasons, happy with your informed decision, and be as healthy as possible. A time of personal crisis is no time to be making decisions about such surgery. Some women may need more discussion if you have a family history of breast cancer, as the tissue on the abdomen can be used to reconstruct an absent breast, an opportunity that will be lost if this tissue is removed. If you have excess tissue all the way round, a condition more common in weight loss patients but occasionally in post-childbirth women, a bodylift may be a more suitable operation.

What would stop me from having the surgery?

You must not be smoking, outside the BMI range of 18-28 (although this may be a little modified in massive weight loss patients), under stress when making your decision, or have a medical condition that would make surgery unsafe.

How is it done?

Abdominoplasty surgery is done in a fully accredited hospital. Depending on the type of abdominoplasty you have, an incision is made from the pubic hair line and across towards the hips and the excess tissue removed. The remaining skin is stretched down to the incision line and a flatter, smoother abdomen will result. For an extended abdominoplasty and bodylift the incision lines go further around.

What are the benefits?

This is entirely a personal matter. If the weight and size of the excess abdominal tissue distresses you, then removing it may be a great relief. It will also help your appearance and may even help with some aches and pains associated with the weight of the tissue removed. In addition if the tummy muscles have remained split after pregnancy, tightening them can help with exercise and back pain.

What are the risks?

All surgery carries some element of risk. You can minimize your risk by being as healthy as possible and as psychologically prepared as possible, by selecting an experienced and qualified surgeon, and giving yourself a stress free time during which to recover. Despite this there are some risks that you will need to discuss. The most common of these is a fluid collection under the skin. Occasionally the incision may take a little extra time to heal, but overall this procedure usually goes very smoothly. There are other risks common to all surgery, and you should be aware of these.

Are there scars?

The incision lines for the surgery are always present, but fade over the first six to twelve months. While always visible, as a rule the incision lines become relatively inconspicuous in most, and can be covered by clothing.

How long am I in hospital for?

Abdominoplasty can be a day procedure or overnight, depending how you pull up after the anaesthetic. Someone will need to take you home and should be with you the first night. Abdominoplasty is not a particularly painful procedure, but can be a little uncomfortable if the muscles need to be tightened. You will be given plenty of medication if it is required to keep you comfortable.

How long will I need to recover?

This varies but usually ranges from two to six weeks depending on what you do. If your activities are sedentary, then you may only need a couple of weeks, but if you do heavy work and lifting you may need up to six weeks. It's a good idea to take some time so as you don't put pressure on your recovery. The same guidelines apply to exercise, with mild to moderate exercise allowable early on to full aerobic activities by six weeks. By the way, you can shower after surgery. You must not drive until you are fully recovered from both the anaesthetic and the discomfort of surgery so as you are fully capable. If in doubt, don't.

Do I wear a garment after surgery?

You need to wear a pressure garment after surgery for three weeks. This helps the healing and reduces the possibility of fluid collections. It also acts like a girdle, keeping you compact.

Will I need to be seen after surgery?

Yes. We will keep in close contact with you by telephone for the first few days and then will see you about five days after surgery, then at three weeks, then at three months. You are of course welcome to call or visit anytime with any concerns.