



**PETER
CALLAN**

PLASTIC SURGEON

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. Excess tissue can also hang over a scar, such as after a caesarean section.

Is Mr Callan experienced at this procedure?

Mr Callan has many years of experience at this procedure. He performs abdominoplasty regularly and keeps up to date with the latest techniques. As a fully trained plastic surgeon, Mr Callan performs this procedure to the highest standard available.

Can I see photographs?

You can see photographs of people who have had this procedure when you have your consultation. As Mr Callan performs this procedure frequently, we have a large number of photographs of those you have had the type of abdominoplasty you may be suitable for.

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. You 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 make me unsuitable for this surgery?

Smoking, being outside the BMI (body mass index) range of 18-28, under stress when making your decision, or having a medical condition that would make surgery unsafe.

How is it done?

Mr Callan performs all his surgery at St John of God Hospital in Geelong, a fully accredited hospital. Depending on the type of abdominoplasty you have, an incision is made from the pubic hair line and across to 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 body lift the incision lines go further around.

What are the benefits?

What you get out of surgery is entirely a personal matter. If the weight and volume of the excess abdominal tissue distresses you, then removing it may be a great relief and may make you feel better about your appearance in general. It may even help relieve 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 relieve back pain and make exercise easier.

What are the risks?

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

Will I have scars?

The incision lines for the surgery are always present but fade over the first six to 12 months. As a rule the incision lines become relatively inconspicuous in most people and can be covered by clothing.

How long am I in hospital for?

Abdominoplasty can be a day procedure or involve an overnight stay, depending how you are after the anaesthetic. Someone will need to take you home from hospital and should stay 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 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 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 out from more strenuous activities so you don't prolong your recovery. The same guidelines apply to exercise, with mild to moderate exercise allowable early on and full aerobic activities after six weeks. You can shower after surgery. You must not drive until you are fully recovered from both the anaesthetic and the discomfort of surgery. 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 process and reduces the possibility of fluid collections. It also acts like a girdle and keeps you compact during recovery.

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 and at three months. You are of course welcome to call or visit any time with any concerns.