



## **Information about liposuction**

### **Part 1 of 3**

This leaflet explains liposuction. **It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please initial each page** to show that you have read it. For information on the risks and complications of the surgery, and care after liposuction, see parts 2 and 3.

### **What is liposuction?**

Liposuction involves removing fat by sucking it out through a tube. It is most effective for people whose weight is normal and who have firm, elastic skin. It is not a substitute for losing weight.

### **Why have liposuction?**

Liposuction can help to correct and improve the contours of parts of the body it is difficult to shift weight from. The areas that are most commonly treated by liposuction are the tummy, hips, buttocks, thighs, knees, neck and upper arms. Liposuction can also be used to remove lipomas (non-cancerous tumours of fatty tissue) and fatty swellings that can develop under men's nipples to look like breasts (gynaecomastia).

### **What will happen before the procedure?**

You will meet your surgeon to talk about why you want surgery and what you want. The surgeon will make a note of any illnesses you have or have had in the past. They will also make a record of any medication you are on, including herbal remedies and medicines that are not prescribed by your doctor.

Your surgeon will examine you, and may take some photographs for your medical records. They will ask you if you want to have someone with you during the examination, and ask you to sign a consent form for taking, storing and using the photographs.

The surgeon will measure your height and weight to make sure that it is safe to do an operation. If you are overweight, or planning to become pregnant, your surgeon may suggest delaying your operation.

### **How is the procedure performed?**

Liposuction is carried out using a thin tube called a cannula that is inserted through tiny cuts in the skin. The cannula is used to loosen the fat and make the body part being treated a nicer shape. Next, a special suction device is attached to the cannula, and the fat is sucked from the body. Finally, the cuts in the skin are sewn up.

Page 1 of 4

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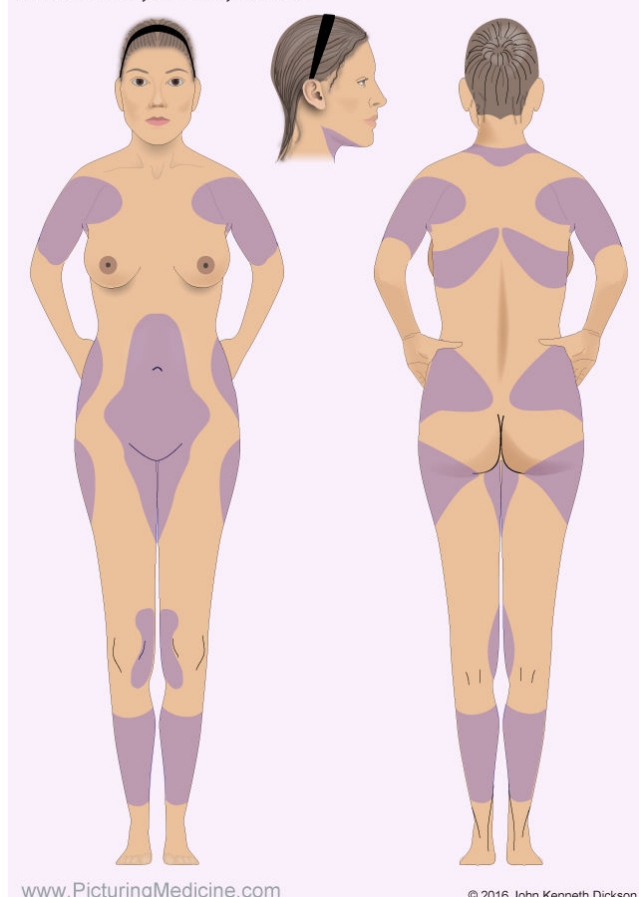




There are some slightly different techniques. Some surgeons inject the area being treated with solutions (known as a wet or tumescent technique), and others do not. Suction is usually performed with a powerful vacuum machine, but it is sometimes possible to use a simple syringe for small areas. Ultrasound assisted lipectomy, where ultrasound waves are used to help disrupt the fat cells and make them easier to remove, is another technique.

### Liposuction

Areas of the body commonly treated ..



### Choosing a surgeon

If you decide to have liposuction, only go to a surgeon who is properly trained and on the specialist register held by the General Medical Council (GMC). They will talk to you about what is possible for you or might give the best results. Members of several different organisations do cosmetic surgery, so your general practitioner (GP) is the best person to advise you on who to see.

Page 2 of 4

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You should talk to your surgeon before the procedure about whether you might need further surgery, and about how and when to pay.

Nobody needs urgent liposuction. If you are not given time to think about it, you should look elsewhere.

### **How can I help the procedure be a success?**

Be as healthy as possible. It is important to keep your weight steady with a good diet and regular exercise. Your GP can give you advice on this.

If you smoke, stopping at least six weeks before the operation will help to reduce the risk of complications.

Do not worry about removing hair near where cuts will be made, but do have a bath or shower during the 24 hours before your operation to make sure that the area is as clean as possible.

You should avoid using aspirin or anti-inflammatory drugs for two weeks before the operation. If you are anaemic, you should take iron tablets. Your surgeon may advise you to stop taking the contraceptive pill if the liposuction is going to be extensive, perhaps involving cutting skin away.

**To find out more, visit the websites below.**

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Page 3 of 4

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**The British Association of  
Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons**



**BAPRAS** British Association of Plastic  
Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons

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**Information on cosmetic surgery**

[www.baaps.org.uk/safety-in-surgery](http://www.baaps.org.uk/safety-in-surgery)

[www.bapras.org.uk/public/patient-information/cosmetic-surgery/considering-cosmetic-surgery](http://www.bapras.org.uk/public/patient-information/cosmetic-surgery/considering-cosmetic-surgery)

[www.gov.uk/government/news/recommendations-to-protect-people-who-choose-cosmetic-surgery](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/recommendations-to-protect-people-who-choose-cosmetic-surgery)

**General Medical Council (GMC) plastic surgery specialist register**

[www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/register/LRMP.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/register/LRMP.asp)

**Anaesthetics**

[www.rcoa.ac.uk/patientinfo](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patientinfo)

**Disclaimer**

This document is designed to give you useful information. It is not advice on your specific needs and circumstances. It does not replace the need for you to have a thorough consultation, so you should get advice from a suitably qualified medical practitioner. We – The BAAPS and BAPRAS – have no liability for any decision you make about the surgery you decide to have.

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Page 4 of 4

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