



What is body contouring?

Body contouring incorporates a number of cosmetic procedures aimed at altering the shape of the body. Body contouring efficiently reduces excess skin and also eliminates the pockets of fat resistance to diet and exercise. Patients are able to reshape their body achieving a lean and toned body shape.

Body contouring procedures

Body contouring procedures include the following;

- Panniculectomy (Stomach lift or abdominoplasty)
- Lower body lift (Thighs and buttocks)
- Brachioplasty (Arm lift)
- Breast lift (and reduction)
- Facial lift

Loose skin in the above areas is attributed to rapid weight loss either through diet and exercise or bariatric surgery. It can also be caused by aging especially in people over the age of 50 years. For patients requiring more than one procedure, the surgeries are performed with a minimum of three months apart to allow enough time for the healing and recovery process. To minimize the duration of the procedure, operations can be combined. Panniculectomy is combined with the lower body lift as the initial operation and brachioplasty can be performed together with breast and upper body lift as the second operation. Facial operations are carried out last.

Side effects

Body contouring procedures present a number of associated risks. The wounds incurred during the procedures, like in all other surgical operations can be contaminated leading to infections. Impaired healing can cause wound separation, especially in previously obese patients. The same patients are also prone to blood clotting (thrombosis) in the legs. Fluid build up (seroma) is another associated complication.

With highly qualified and experienced surgeons, these risks can be minimized. Other side effects such as scarring tend to fade away with time.

Expectations

Long lasting results can be achieved if patients are able to maintain their weight. For best results patients should be at their desired weight and it is important to maintain that level throughout the procedure. After the procedure, it takes an additional three months for best results to be seen. This is due to the time needed for the swelling to diminish. In previously obese individuals, it may take more time to achieve the same results due to the overall skin laxity and reduced skin thickness. Naturally, the scars take around a year to fade.

Patients should hold extensive consultations with their doctor prior to the surgery to discuss their expectations. Their health status should also be taken into consideration to avoid future complications. Any drugs and lifestyle choices such as smoking that could interfere with the healing process should be stopped. Patients are advised to wear compression garments to quicken the healing process. After the operation, most people report an increase in their self-confidence.

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