

WHAT IS A TUMMY TUCK (ABDOMINOPLASTY)?

ABOUT THE PROCEDURE

Abdominoplasty, commonly known as a tummy tuck, is a procedure designed to remove excess skin and fat from your abdominal area. It also involves tightening the underlying (rectus) muscles so that you are left with as flat a tummy as possible. It is not intended for weight loss, but to improve body contouring.

Age, weight changes and pregnancy can leave you with a less than flat abdomen that no amount of exercise and diet can fix. That sagging belly is due to the muscles on either side of your belly button stretching and separating due to weight gain or pregnancy. An abdominoplasty not only tightens and repairs this weakness but also removes all the excess skin and fat from above your belly button to your pubic bone.

Liposuction is sometimes needed to help define your waist and lessen the pubic area.

PRE-SURGERY CHECKLIST

1. Prescriptions filled before surgery and Tylenol.
2. Dressings (gauze or maxi pads/panty liners works well).
3. Antibiotic ointment (Polysporin) or Vaseline.
4. Q-tips.
5. Paper tape.
6. Notebook to record drainage amount.
7. Lots of fluids you like to drink.
8. Pillows for behind your knees when lying.
9. Small pillow to hug if coughing/sneezing.
10. Comfortable place to rest/sleep that you can bend your knees and have your back elevated slightly.
11. Stop the use of all anti-inflammatories 2 weeks before after your surgery (Tylenol is fine to use).
12. Lots of good movies and books at your fingertips.
13. Comfy pants and tops that you can easily get on and off.
14. Pre-plan/make meals as you won't feel like cooking.
15. Book an appointment to see Dr MacDonald after your surgery for a minimum of 6 weeks after surgery.

AFTER SURGERY

1. Use both pain medications regularly for the first 24-48 hours, then lessen as you can.
2. Time off work is 6 weeks.
3. Don't do any activity that increases your heart rate for 6 weeks after surgery. Slow walking right away is recommended.
4. After surgery take slow, deep breaths and keep your legs moving.
5. Adjust the binder as needed to make it more comfortable and wear 24/7 for 6 weeks.
6. Do not shower until drains come out – usually day 5-7 post-op.
7. Sleep on your back with knees bent and back slightly elevated.
8. If the dressing falls off or becomes soiled, please remove it and replace with new dressing (e.g. maxi pads work well for replacement dressings).
9. All the stitches are dissolving.
10. The nurse will show you how to care for your drains before you leave the hospital.
11. If one of the drain tubes becomes blocked, it may leak around the drain site. Simply reinforce the base with a dressing (e.g. maxi pad) and call my office; if after hours, then call my office the next day.
12. Burning or itchiness is normal.
13. Swelling (especially around the pubic area or lower abdomen) and/or bruising is normal and will settle over time.
14. You may have an altered stream when urinating. This will return to normal in a few days.
15. Numbness of the skin of the upper legs and/or lower abdomen.
16. You can drive when you are no longer taking any pain medication and feel comfortable to do so.