

Cosmetic Surgery Procedures: Overview (page 1)

ABDOMINOPLASTY (tummy tuck)

This procedure is used to flatten a person's abdomen. Excess fat and skin is removed and the muscles of the abdominal wall are tightened. The operation lasts for 2 to 5 hours.

- **Side-effects:** swelling, soreness, numbness of abdominal skin, bruising and tiredness for several weeks or months.
- **Risks:** blood clots, infection, bleeding under the skin flap, poor healing, obvious scars and the need to have a second operation.
- **Recovery:** *Back to work* 2 to 4 weeks; *More strenuous activity* 4 to 6 weeks or more; *Fading and flattening of scars* 3 months to 2 years.

BREAST ENLARGEMENT

This procedure is used to enhance the size of the breasts. Inflatable bags filled with saline are implanted. The operation lasts from 1 to 2 hours.

- **Side-effects:** soreness, swelling, tenderness, bruising, and breast sensitivity.
- **Risks:** the implants may deflate, scar tissue can form around the implants and the breasts can feel tight and hard. There also risks of bleeding, infection and the need to have the implants surgically removed.
- **Recovery:** *Back to work* a few days; *Physical contact with breasts* 3 to 4 weeks; *Fading of scars* Several months to a year or more.

COLLAGEN INJECTIONS

This procedure is used to plump up creased, furrowed or sunken facial skin. Injections of collagen are also used to make the lips look fuller. The session lasts from 15 minutes to 1 hour.

- **Side-effects:** temporary stinging, throbbing or burning sensation, redness, swelling, excess fullness.
- **Risks:** bumps in skin, infection and an allergic reaction to collagen, including a rash, hives, swelling or flu-like symptoms.
- **Duration of results:** variable – a few months to 1 year.

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FACELIFT

This procedure is used to improve sagging facial skin, jowls and loose neck skin. Excess fat is removed, skin is re-draped and the muscles are tightened. The operation lasts for several hours.

- **Side-effects:** bruising, swelling, tenderness, numbness, tightness, dry skin. Men may have a permanent need to shave behind their ears when beard-growing skin is repositioned there.
- **Risks:** infection, bleeding, injury to nerves in the face, excessive scarring, change in hairline.
- **Recovery:** *Back to work* 10 to 14 days; *More strenuous activity* 2 weeks or more; *Bruising* 2 to 3 weeks.

LIPOSUCTION

This procedure is used to improve the shape of the body. Fat that is resistant to exercise is removed using a tube and vacuum device. For large volumes of fat, an ultrasound probe is inserted under the skin to 'liquify' the fat before it is suctioned. The operation lasts from 1 to 2 hours.

- **Side-effects:** soreness, swelling, tenderness, bruising, and numbness.
- **Risks:** rippling or bagginess of skin, skin injury, fluid retention or excessive fluid loss leading to shock, infection and thermal burn injury caused by the heat from the ultrasound device.
- **Recovery:** *Back to work* 1 to 2 weeks; *More strenuous activity* 2 to 4 weeks; *Full recovery from swelling and bruising* 1 to 6 months or more.

Activities

- Make a list of the key words used to talk about cosmetic surgery procedures.
- Write down your own opinions of cosmetic surgery. Is it worth the risk? Would you have cosmetic surgery to change things you don't like about your appearance? Would you have cosmetic surgery to hide scarring from an accident, a fire or chemotherapy treatment for cancer?