

Body Lift

A body lift can remove excess skin and fat tissue, tighten your abdominal muscles, and recontour the remaining skin around your torso. It requires incisions, whose number and placement depend on your size and shape and the amount of tissue to be removed. It also requires insertion of a catheter and draining tubes, and special monitoring during your recovery. Your hospital stay may last one or more days. Your procedure may include abdominoplasty, breast reduction and lifts, arm lifts, and/or facelift.

PREPARING FOR TREATMENT

During your consultation, you'll need to inform your surgeon of your allergies, previous surgeries, and any medications, vitamins, diet supplements, and prescription or other drugs you're taking. You'll be given a full physical exam and some tests may be performed prior to surgery (such as an EKG or blood work). It's important for you to be close to your target weight before your surgery. If you lose significant weight after your surgery, excess skin may be a recurring problem. Your surgeon can help you decide on the timing of your surgery.

As your surgery date approaches you'll be given instructions about eating, drinking, taking medications, shaving, and bathing. You will be required to quit smoking prior to surgery to help your healing process and reduce your risk of complications.

RECOVERY

You may feel a certain amount of discomfort after you come out of anesthesia. The incision areas may be sore, bruised, and swollen. You'll have various options to help alleviate any pain. You'll be given compression garments to wear according to your surgeon's instructions. It may take 2 to 3 months for swelling to decrease and your body's new shape to be revealed. During your recovery, you may weigh more because of the swelling.

Your surgeon will tell you how to walk and move to protect your sutures and to help reduce your risk of blood clots, especially in your legs. Your surgeon will also prescribe specific exercises, bathing procedures, and sleeping positions.

You may be able to resume your normal daily activities and gentle walking within a week or two of surgery, and sports and highly physical activities within 8 to 12 weeks. Most important, you'll be asked to refrain from smoking. Not smoking is crucial for a successful healing and recovery process.

RISKS

No surgery is without risks. Your doctor will explain the risks and benefits of your proposed surgery and help you with your decision during your consultation.

Risks include blood clots, fluid collecting under the skin around stitches, nerve damage, infection, and healing problems. Your surgeon will make sure you understand these risks, as well as the general risks inherent in any surgical procedure.

With a body lift, scarring can be extensive. Your surgeon will inform you how much scarring you are likely to have. Many factors contribute to the depth, width, and color of scars. Be sure to ask your surgeon what you can do to aid the healing process.