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## ***Abdominoplasty / Tummy Tuck***

Abdominoplasty or Tummy Tuck is a common cosmetic procedure to remove excess sagging skin and fat from the middle and lower abdomen. The underlying abdominal muscle walls can be tightened at the same time to improve the appearance of a firmer, flatter and shapelier abdomen. Frequently [liposculpture / liposuction](#) to the abdomen and other adjacent areas (flanks, hips, back and thighs) are done at the same time to improve the appearance. Patients frequently also request tummy tuck and [breast reduction](#) or [breast lift](#) to be performed at the same time.

Abdominoplasty can be an option for the following conditions

1. Sagging skin, fat and muscles not improve by exercise and dieting
2. Stretched abdomen due to pregnancy, weight gain or aging.
3. Large apron of fat (apron or pannus) below the umbilicus that may cause skin irritations, infections, difficulty in walking and maintenance of hygiene.
4. Large abdomen that protrudes and is out of proportion with the rest of the body.
5. Weakened and separated abdominal muscles

### **Types of abdominoplasty**

1. **Radical abdominoplasty (Full Tummy Tuck)** – the excess skin and fat from the umbilicus to the bikini line are removed and the umbilicus is repositioned. The underlying muscles are tightened. The bikini incision is from hip to hip, just above the pubis.
2. **Partial abdominoplasty / Lipectomy (Mini Tummy Tuck)** – only a segment of skin and fat below the umbilicus are removed. The bikini incision is shorter. This is a less complex procedure with a faster recovery time.

The simplest procedure and often the best may be [liposculpture / liposuction](#). This is most suitable for patients whose muscle tone is excellent and those who do not have redundant skin. Liposculpture of the abdomen can have impressive results and there is a rapid return to normal activity.

### **MAKING A DECISION TO PROCEED WITH SURGERY**

You should be informed as much as possible before making a decision to proceed with abdominal surgery. Abdominoplasty is an elective procedure, which means that it is a personal choice and not necessary for maintenance of good health.

You and Dr Pham must weigh the benefits, risks, scars, recovery time and tightening aspects of the various different procedures. Dr Pham will discuss with you the options available and once your goals are understood, he will recommend the appropriate procedure. The types of anaesthesia available and the facility where surgery will be performed will be thoroughly discussed with you.

Following a joint decision by you and Dr Pham to go ahead with a procedure, photographs of you will be taken. You are encouraged to seek the opinion of other surgeons if you are uncertain.

**The goal is for a natural, aesthetically pleasing and balanced look.**

Please do not hesitate to seek another doctor's opinion if you are uncertain about Dr Pham's advice.

You are the most qualified person to select a surgeon that is right for you.

### **Contraindications to Abdominoplasty**

There are a number of reasons why Abdominoplasty is not suitable in some patients including -

1. being unable to have an anaesthetic due to high risks
2. bleeding tendencies and poor healing
3. surgical risks are too high
4. other less invasive procedures may be more appropriate
5. planned pregnancy
6. being in the process of losing more weight

### **Private Health Insurance Rebate**

Abdominoplasty for medical or functional reasons is usually partially covered by Medicare and Health Insurance Funds. There will be an out of pocket or gap fee. You will be given a quote from Dr Pham (surgeon's fee only) and you should contact your health fund to find out the amount you can expect to be rebated.

### **Understanding the Procedure**

Full Abdominoplasty is usually performed under general anaesthesia and takes 3 hours. Staying in hospital for 1-3 days is recommended. The recovery time is longer than for a Mini Abdominoplasty.

Liposculpture and Mini Abdominoplasty in selected cases can be done with local anaesthesia and sedation. Some patients may be able to go home the same day. The procedure takes about 2 hours.

The pain level after abdominoplasty is significant and pain medications are usually required. A pressure garment is put on in the operating room, or just after surgery, and you must keep it on for the first 3-6 weeks. In most patients a drain is inserted and this will be removed within one week.

### **Initial Consultation**

The majority of Dr Pham's patients are from referrals by General Practitioners or other Specialists. However, many patients are now seeing Dr Pham because of *word of mouth* referrals from previous patients. These referrals are often the best referrals. Friends, relatives or coworkers who have had facial and cosmetic plastic surgery are often willing to share their experiences. It is often helpful to talk to these people before contemplating surgery.

Facial and cosmetic surgical procedures can help increase self-confidence because, generally when people look better, they feel better. However certain aspects of facial plastic and cosmetic surgery which cannot be ignored are the patient's mental and emotional attitudes.

An initial consultation gives you and Dr Pham the opportunity to discuss your intended procedure/s in full.

### **Some of the questions you may wish to ask are:**

- Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- What is a realistic outcome for me after surgery?
- How long will the operation take?
- What is the recovery time?
- What are the risks involved?
- Is post-operative medication necessary?
- What is the charge for the procedure?

It is a good idea to write down the answers Dr Pham provides so that you can review these carefully later. The consultation also provides you with an opportunity to meet Dr Pham to determine whether your personality and his are compatible and that you feel comfortable with him as your surgeon.

## Medical History

It is important that you are candid with Dr Pham and his staff regarding your medical history so that he can plan the best possible treatment. This information is strictly confidential. Please inform him of any:

- Previous facial, abdomen and/or cosmetic surgery (nose, eyelids, breasts, abdomen etc.)
- Past and current medical conditions such as heart, lung and kidney disease, prolonged bleeding or excessive bruising, blood clots in the legs or lungs, or gastric reflux.
- Current medications especially Aspirin, Plavix, Iscover, Anti-inflammatories, Warfarin, blood thinners, Insulin, and oral contraceptive pills. Over the counter products such as vitamins and herbal medications may also be important.
- Allergies or adverse reactions to antibiotics, anaesthetic drugs or other medications.
- Psychological and psychiatric illnesses
- Past keloid scarring or poor healing
- Connective tissue disorders such rheumatoid arthritis, lupus erythematosus, scleroderma or similar
- Previous radiotherapy to the head, neck or breast areas.

Dr Pham will then examine your features and after discussing options and specific risks and benefits will recommend the most appropriate procedure/s for you.

We respect your privacy. During your consultation you will be able to view some *before and after* photographs. We emphasise that the only photos shown are those of patients who have given their written permission to do so.

## **PREOPERATIVE (Before surgery) INSTRUCTIONS**

- Please cease Aspirin, Aspirin-containing products, Plavix and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (such as Ibuprofen) for 10 days prior to and two weeks following your surgery. If you are on any medications that affect bleeding (such as Warfarin) please notify Dr Pham.
- Smoking tobacco and alcohol increase anaesthetic and surgical risks. Please cease them for one to two weeks prior to and three weeks following surgery. They cause delayed wound healing, skin redness and other complications.
- Please notify us of all your routine medications and significant health history. You can remain on your daily medications, except for blood thinners unless instructed otherwise.
- Arnica, a natural herb that significantly decreases bruising, can be taken before and after surgery along with Vitamin C (ascorbic acid), which helps promote healing.
- If you are having a morning procedure you must not eat or drink after midnight the evening before. If you are having an afternoon procedure you must not eat or drink after 6.00am on the morning of surgery. You may, however, take your normal medications and brush your teeth.
- Please shower and remove any make-up and nail polish before arriving for your procedure.
- Unless you are remaining in hospital someone will need to drive you home after surgery and stay with you that evening.
- If you have any concerns please call the office. Remember, we are all here to give you the best possible care.

## **POSTOPERATIVE (After Surgery) INSTRUCTIONS**

During surgery, dressings and a corset will be placed on the wounds and the abdomen. Immediately after surgery, you will be transferred to the recovery room for monitoring. Once awake and when it is safe to do so, you will be transferred to your room. You will usually stay overnight but occasionally patients can go home with a responsible adult.

Abdominal swelling, bruising, tightness and pain are to be expected, especially in the first few days. Keep dressing tapes dry and intact until they are removed after 1 week. Most sutures are dissolvable and the remaining ones will be removed at the first postoperative review after 1 week.

Some patients may have mood swings, feel depressed, anxious or elated after the procedure. These feelings usually resolve but if they persist then please inform Dr Pham.

**Medications-** Dr Pham will prescribe pain relief to be used as directed. Usually Paracetamol + Codeine (Panadiene Forte), Tramadol or Oxycodone is sufficient. Most patients complain of discomfort rather than pain. Do not take additional pain relievers other than what Dr Pham suggests or prescribes and start any antibiotics when you get home.

**Diet-** You should take plenty of fluids and eat nourishing food as tolerated. You may feel nauseous for the first 24 hours.

**Activity-** You should rest for the entire day after surgery. Sleep on your back with the head of your bed elevated and place 1-2 pillows under the knees for one week after surgery. You can resume most light daily activities after a few days. You should avoid heavy lifting, exercise and activities such as running for 4 weeks after surgery. You can shower after a few days. Sexual intercourse can usually resume after 3 weeks. You can drive after 2 to 3 weeks.

Most people can resume work after 2- 3 week or earlier, but occasionally longer if patients prefer more privacy. Most of the swelling and bruising will subside after 4 -6 weeks. You should wear a corset for 3 to 6 weeks.

**Scars management-** Scars usually remain red and raised for 6-12 weeks. They will gradually fade and flatten. You can massage the scars with two fingers and should use moisturiser and sunscreen. Avoid direct sunlight for at least one year.

**Final results** following tummy tuck are not apparent for up to 3-6 months following surgery. We request that you please follow-up with us for at least one year for assessment and postoperative photographs.

**Please Inform Dr Pham's office or the hospital where the procedure was performed** if you have the following:

- High fever, chills or a temperature of more than 38 degrees
- Heavy bleeding from the wounds
- Severe pain or tenderness
- Significant redness, or discharge around the incisions
- Significant swelling of the abdomen

**If you have any concerns you can contact Dr Pham's office. Remember, we are all here to give you the best possible care.**

## **Risks of Surgery**

Modern surgery is safe but does have risks. Complications can occur despite the highest standards and world's best practice principles used by Dr Pham.

It is not possible to list all the risks but you should be informed of the common side effects and benefits so that you can make an informed consent. Dr Pham will discuss these in greater detail at consultation. You should write down any particular questions or specific concerns.

The potential risks are

### **General risk of surgery**

- Wound infection or breakdown – may require antibiotics
- Bruising and swelling
- Bleeding, blood clots or seroma
- Chest infection
- Sore throat from the breathing tube
- Heart problems, blood clots (lower legs or lungs) or breathing difficulties due to anaesthesia and surgery in some patients
- Scars that become raised (hypertrophic or keloid)
- Slow healing especially in smokers

### **Specific Risks**

- Swelling and numbness or tingling and needle like sensations around the abdomen and flanks of for up to twelve months.
- Fluid accumulation – may require needle aspiration in Dr Pham's office
- Asymmetry of the two sides of the abdomen
- Unusual shape and abnormal position of the umbilicus
- Lumps or cysts
- Painful or unattractive scarring
- Subjective dissatisfaction with the final outcome

- Abdominal wall deformity
- Allergic reaction to suture, tape adhesives and others.

**FEES** The cost of is:

	Full Tummy Tuck / Radical Abdominoplasty	Mini Tummy Tuck / Lipectomy	Liposuction / Liposculpture
Surgeon fee	8000-9000	4500-6000	Depend on area and amount 1000-1500 per area
Anaesthetist fee	2000-2500	1200-1800	
Hospital	Partially Covered by Private Insurance	Partially Covered by Private Insurance	Not covered by Private Health Insurance

There may be additional cost for complex or combined case with other procedures.

If you have private insurance – you may be qualify for Medicare and Private Insurance rebate.

**Please [contact us 9380 4488](tel:93804488) for your consultation on [abdominoplasty / tummy tuck](#)**

You can view our website [www.perthcosmeticsurgery.com.au](http://www.perthcosmeticsurgery.com.au)

- Information on a range **cosmetic surgery and non surgical cosmetic procedures** available
- **[Gallery / Before & After Photos](#)**
- Find answers to your most **[Frequently Asked Questions](#)** (FAQs).
- Fees and Private Health Insurance rebate

If you wish to learn more about cosmetic surgery and facial plastic surgery please [contact us](#) to schedule a [consultation](#) with our Facial Plastic and Cosmetic Plastic Surgeon, **[Dr Tuan Pham](#)** or Nurse Coordinator.

**GALLERY of Abdominoplasty / Tummy Tuck**



**Before After**

**Before After**

**Before After**