

Frequently Asked Questions



1 What is a Tummy Tuck?

A tummy tuck is the common name for what Plastic Surgeons call an abdominoplasty. This is an operation to remove excess skin around the tummy and can also be combined with liposuction and tightening of the underlying tummy muscles to refine the result.

2 Who is suitable?

You should be in good health, not smoking, not taking any medications that may make you bleed and you should ideally have completed your family. You should consult with your GP if you are on any medication before any operation to assess your suitability. The operation is not a substitution for weight loss and it is best to be at the weight you plan to stay when you have the surgery.

3 What about Scars?

The operation is done through a scar that runs from hip to hip but there are variations depending on whereabouts the excess skin is and so Mr Lambe will always draw the pattern of scar on you in the pre op clinic before you book for surgery so you can check that you are happy with its position. The scar can be varied to fit beneath clothes or depending on whether there is loose skin from side to side and not just in the lower tummy. Scars start off as pink and eventually fade to a thin silvery line over time.

4 What is the difference between a full tummy tuck and a mini tummy tuck?

A full tummy tuck lifts all the tummy right from the ribs and therefore allows the Surgeon to tighten the underlying muscles and to correct any laxity (loose skin) in the upper part of the tummy at the same time. This requires an incision around the umbilicus (tummy button) too.

A mini tummy tuck is for ladies who just have a small excess in the lower tummy area and this can therefore be removed with a smaller scar and without lifting the skin to the ribs. Recovery and complications are lower.

It is therefore very important to have a detailed assessment to discuss all the pros and cons of each operation and which one is more suitable for you.

5 How long does the surgery take?

The operation generally takes about 2-3 hrs depending on the extent of surgery needed.

6 Will I need drains?

We do not use drains as a special layer is maintained beneath the tummy to drain fluid away (via the Lymphatics) and also by using a special tissue glue so you do not have to have uncomfortable removal of drains post op.

7 How long will I be in hospital for?

You will generally need between 1 and 2 nights in hospital depending on how soon you can mobilise (move about). It is very important that you have someone to pick you up from the hospital after your surgery.

Tummy Tuck (Abdominoplasty)

8 What should I do post op?

You should leave all dressings in place and keep the wounds clean and dry.

You should always try to mobilise and this means each hour through the day doing 5-10 mins gentle walking. This helps you to recover and reduces the risk of post op clots in the legs.

You will be provided with an abdominal support post-op which you should wear for 6 weeks to improve the result and you will be provided with painkillers on discharge from the hospital.

It is best that you take these on a regular basis as they work better that way. You will need 1 or 2 days of rest and then you must start walking and you may need to be bent at the waist for the first 2 weeks post op but you will be able to gradually straighten up.

9 How long before I see the final result?

The final result will be apparent after 6 months as there can often be swelling in the lower tummy through the intervening weeks and throughout the day.

10 What are the risks of complication?

There can be collections of fluid under the skin, known as seromas these often resolve with no treatment and because we use glue and preserve the lymphatics there is a very low incidence of this. Wound healing problems can happen. The part of the tummy that is tightest can sometimes take longer to heal. They are not common and by not smoking and taking care of your wounds this risk can be further reduced.

11 What shouldn't I do post surgery?

You should not lift any heavy weights or young children for a period of 10 weeks post op in order that you do not undo any of the good work, so you will need help around the house and further support if you have young children.

12 How do I book?

You will need a private consultation to discuss your personal requirements as everyone is different.

For a confidential, informal chat
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