



SMITA R. RAMANADHAM, M.D.  
PLASTIC SURGERY

## Liposuction

### Patient Care Instructions

#### *General Information*

Liposuction is a general term for the removal of fat using a minimally invasive technique with small incisions and small suction cannulas. It can be performed in multiple areas on the body and neck. The procedure is designed to decrease the thickness of the subcutaneous tissue and shape the areas of treatment. It can be performed with multiple types of suction devices and sizes of liposuction cannulas. In some situations this technique can be combined with other excisional procedures, which remove excess skin, such as tummy tucks and arm lifts. Dr. Ramanadham will discuss the technique that will give you the optimal result in each region.

#### *Things to handle prior to your surgery*

Avoid all NSAIDs (motrin, aspirin, ibuprofen, etc) for 7-10 days prior to procedure unless otherwise directed by your doctor. Continued use may cause bleeding.

Avoid all herbal medicine or supplements for 3 weeks prior to procedure. Continued use may cause bleeding.

Arrange for someone to drive you home from the hospital and stay with you for at least 1 to 2 days.

Necessary medications will be called into your pharmacy or given to you on the day of surgery. These should be picked up prior to surgery if possible.

Protein supplementation can be started one to two weeks before surgery and should include over 20 grams of additional protein daily.

Have electrolyte containing fluids such as Gatorade or electrolyte water on hand.

Have stool softeners/laxatives on hand, such as Colace, Biscodyl, Milk of Magnesia. These can be purchased at your local pharmacy.

You will need to obtain a compressive garment to wear postoperatively. This may be provided by Dr. Ramanadham. This will help with your swelling.

Review the attached list of medications not to take during the perioperative period. If you have any further questions that were not addressed during your consultation then please call our office.

If you are unsure if you can stop a medication then please call us or the prescribing provider to confirm if this is medically safe.

For your convenience, we have included a **Suggested Shopping List** in the addendum to these instructions



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### *Pre-Operative Guidelines*

Smoking should be stopped a minimum of 4 weeks prior to surgery. Smoking should be avoided for at least 4 weeks after surgery as well. Smoking can greatly interfere with healing and lead to postoperative complications.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery. This includes no water, gum, or hard candy.

Blood pressure and/or heart medications can be taken with a sip of water as directed by your prescribing physician.

If you take medication for diabetes then confirm with your prescribing physician how to manage these medications prior to surgery.

If you are prone to nausea or motion sickness let your anesthesiologist know on the day of surgery. Medications can be started prior to surgery or during surgery to help improve your postoperative experience.

### *Post-Op Care*

Take pain medication as prescribed. Often these medications are necessary for the first 1 or 2 days and then on an as needed basis. Do not drink alcohol with these medications.

Ibuprofen (Motrin) can be started the 7 days after surgery.

If given a binder then wear it continuously for the first 6 weeks. You may take it off to shower or if you need a break. Make sure someone is with you the first time you remove the compression garment as some patients feel dizzy or light-headed. The white foam pads can be replaced with the binder or garments.

You may purchase a full length Lycra or Spandex girdle or spanx without zippers at a department store such as Nordstroms, for use following surgery. This should be snug but not too tight.

Many patients wear the garment for comfort for longer than 6 weeks. You will have improved results if worn longer or just nightly after this time.

You can put the garment in the washer and dryer while you are showering and then put it back on in 1 to 2 hours.

Take a suggested stool softener/laxative until bowels begin to function normally after surgery. A combination of anesthesia and pain medications usually make these necessary for a few days.

Do not smoke or be around smoking as even second hand smoke delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

Get plenty of rest.

Follow a well-balanced diet, which includes protein and is limited in salt intake. A high salt diet or meal, can lead to increased swelling and prolonged recovery. It is best to continue the protein supplementation for approximately 3 weeks after surgery.



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Oral hydration should include the use of electrolyte containing fluids such as Gatorade or a low calorie substitute. Limit the amount of caffeinated beverages as they can promote dehydration; however Dr. Ramanadham recommends you maintain your daily average of caffeine to avoid headaches.

### *Activity Restrictions*

Walking is encouraged the day of the operation and can be increased over the first 2 weeks. Cardiovascular exercise can be resumed after 2 weeks with all activities to be resumed at 4 weeks.

Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for 4 weeks.

Do not drive for 5 to 7 days or until you are no longer taking oral pain medications.

Do not run, lift weights, play tennis or golf for 4 weeks after surgery. It is important to keep your heart rate under 100 beats per minute for 4 weeks.

Light cardiovascular exercises can be resumed gradually after 2 weeks.

Heavy lifting/stretching (Yoga) can be resumed after 4 weeks.

### *Incision Care*

The incisions for liposuction are small (less than 1 cm) and usually placed in inconspicuous areas.

Dr. Ramanadham closes the liposuction incisions with stitches under the skin and one simple absorbable stitch in the skin. The incision is then covered with a butterfly bandage or band aid.

Minimal drainage is to be expected from the incisions. This can be more, however, in the first 1-2 days but will decrease following this.

You may shower the day after the operation. Make sure someone is with you at your first shower.

The liposuction garment or binder can be removed for showering. White foam pads can be replaced with the binder or garment if clean. Any gauze and tape can be discarded and do not need to be replaced after the first shower.

You may gently begin washing your incisions with mild soap and water, but do not submerge the incisions for at least 4 weeks. Avoid lakes, oceans, and pools.

If you have persistent sutures, they will be removed in 7 to 14 days.

### *What to Expect after Liposuction Surgery*

Moderate swelling and induration (hardness) of the areas of liposuction is expected. This will subside in 6 to 9 weeks but will take 1 year to completely resolve and for you to get your final results.



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Bruising and swelling may spread to surrounding areas and regions of dependence, like knees, waist and genitals.

It is common to have discomfort and mild burning around the incisions after liposuction surgery. This is normal and will improve shortly after surgery.

Discomfort in the areas of liposuction may worsen with increased activity. Deep muscle tightness may worsen as well. Massage and anti-inflammatory medications will help this subside.

You can expect some bloody oozing from the incisions. Gauze may be reapplied if it is bothersome. However you should call the clinic if you have continuous bleeding, significantly more swelling on one side than the other, or any severe pain associated with swelling.

Tightness of the underlying muscles is a normal feeling after this surgery. This may worsen over the first 2 days.

This will relax with time and can be relieved with light activity and keeping compression on the area.

There may be a feeling of numbness of the liposuction areas that will subside with time.

Red discoloration of the incisions may occur if there is significant swelling, especially in the area of the sutures. This will resolve when the glue falls off and the stitches are removed.

Constipation is common after any operation, and is secondary to the anesthetic, pain medication and dehydration.

Please stay well hydrated and use the recommended stool softener and/or laxative until bowels return to normal.

### *When to Call the Office*

If you have increased swelling and bruising on one side of the body significantly more than the other. Remove the compression garment to make this determination. This may represent a hematoma (collection of blood) or a seroma (collection of clear fluid).

If you have increasing redness or swelling around the incision.

If you have severe pain not relieved by pain medication.

If you have any side effects from the medication: rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.

If you have fever over 101.

If you have yellow or greenish drainage from an incision or notice a foul odor.

If you notice some vaginal burning and itching or severe diarrhea as a result of the antibiotics used during and after surgery.

For medical questions, please call our office.



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### *Follow-up Care and Appointments*

Your first follow up appointment will be in approximately 2 weeks with Dr. Ramanadham. You should then schedule to be seen at 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 1 year. This may vary.

Incisions will be evaluated and persistent stitches will be removed if not dissolved at your second visit. Generally they are dissolvable and will fall out.

### *Suggested Shopping List*

#### *Items to have on hand prior to surgery*

#### *Liposuction Surgery*

- Prescriptions will be called into your local pharmacy as ordered by Dr. Ramanadham or given to you on the day of surgery. Typical medications are as follows but these will be tailored to your needs.
  - Norco or tramadol (pain medication)
  - Zofran (nausea)
  
- Ibuprofen (Motrin)- can take after 7 days.
  
- Gatorade or another low calorie alternative, such as water with electrolytes
  
- Protein Supplements
  
- Full length Lycra or Spandex girdle or Spanx without zippers (can be obtained at a department store such as Nordstroms).
  
  
- Stool softener / laxative (choose one):
  - Ducosate (Colace) 100 mg orally two to three times daily when taking pain medication
  - Milk of Magnesia 30cc/1 Tablespoon twice daily when taking pain medication
  - Prune juice or Sorbitol orally

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- Biscodyl or Magnesium Citrate as needed for constipation