

Liposuction Risks



As with any major surgery, liposuction carries risks, such as bleeding and a reaction to anesthesia.

Possible complications
specific to liposuction
include:

- **Contour irregularities.** Your skin may appear bumpy, wavy or withered due to uneven fat removal, poor skin elasticity and unusual healing. These

changes may be permanent. Damage beneath the skin from the thin tube (cannula) that's used during liposuction may give the skin a permanent spotted appearance.

- **Fluid accumulation.**

Temporary pockets of fluid (seromas) can form

under the skin. This fluid may need to be drained with a needle.

- **Numbness.** You may feel temporary or permanent numbness in the affected area.

Temporary nerve irritation also is possible.

- **Infection.** Skin infections are rare but

possible. A severe skin infection may be life-threatening.

- **Internal puncture.**

Rarely, a cannula that penetrates too deeply may puncture an internal organ. This may require emergency surgical repair.

- **Fat embolism.** Pieces of loosened fat may break away and become trapped in a blood vessel and gather in the lungs or travel to the brain. A fat embolism is a medical emergency.

- **Kidney and heart problems.** Shifts in fluid levels as fluids are

being injected and suctioned out can cause potentially life-threatening kidney, heart and lung problems.

- **Lidocaine toxicity.**

Lidocaine is an anesthetic often administered with fluids injected during

liposuction to help manage pain. Although generally safe, in rare circumstances, lidocaine toxicity can occur, causing serious heart and central nervous system problems.

The risk of complications increases if the surgeon is

working on larger surfaces of your body or doing multiple procedures during the same operation. Talk to your surgeon about how these risks apply to you.

How you prepare

Food and medications

Before the procedure,
discuss with your surgeon
what to expect from the
surgery. Your surgeon will
review your medical history,
and ask about any medical
conditions you may have
and any medications,
supplements or herbs you
may be taking.

Your surgeon will recommend that you stop taking certain medications, such as blood thinners or NSAIDs, at least three weeks prior to surgery. You may also need to get certain lab tests before your procedure.

Other precautions

If your procedure requires the removal of only a small amount of fat, the surgery may be done in an office setting. If a large amount of fat will be removed — or if you plan to have other procedures done at the same time — the surgery

may take place in a hospital followed by an overnight stay. In either case, arrange for someone to drive you home and stay with you for at least the first night after the procedure.