



**MR DANIEL BUNKER**  
Plastic Surgery Tasmania  
Specialist Plastic Surgeon  
BE MBBS MS FRACS

L 1/247 Wellington St, TAS 7250  
☎ (03) 6388 8118 📠 (03) 6338 8117  
info@plasticsurgerytasmania.com.au  
www.plasticsurgerytasmania.com.au

## **Liposuction**

### Patient Information Handout

#### **Liposuction**

Liposuction (also known as lipoplasty or lipectomy) aims to improve your body contour by removing excess fat. Prior to removing the fat, the area is infiltrated with a dilute solution of local anaesthetic and adrenaline. This has a number of benefits including improving the ease of liposuction, reducing bleeding, minimising post-operative bruising and providing pain relief. A suction cannula is then used to permanently remove fat cells. Liposuction can be performed as a standalone procedure or it can be used to augment the results of other common plastic surgery procedures such as abdominoplasty, arm lift and thigh lift. It is also useful to target areas of fat accumulation that are more resistant to weight loss (such as the fat over the hips). Optimal results require healthy skin and elastic tissues to allow the body to conform to the smaller volume once the underlying fat is removed.



#### **What Will it Do?**

Liposuction aims to remove areas of excess fat and create a more pleasing figure.

#### **Is it Right for Me?**

At your consult, Mr. Bunker will discuss your goals and expectations and perform a targeted examination prior to discussing a surgical plan if appropriate. Liposuction results depend not only on the skilful removal of excess fat, but it is essential that you have adequate skin quality to enable the skin to retract. If you have poor tissues and too much liposuction is performed, this can result in excess or 'baggy' skin over areas where the liposuction was performed.

Liposuction can be appropriate if:

- You have excess resistant fat with good quality skin
- You have realistic expectations
- Your weight is relatively stable
- You are a non-smoker or have stopped smoking at least 3 months prior
- You are physically healthy and do not have medical conditions that may impair healing or increase the risk of surgery

#### **Will I need Anaesthesia?**

Mr. Bunker performs liposuction under general anaesthesia to maximise patient comfort. Modern anaesthetics are safe and effective but carry some risks, which you will discuss with your anaesthetist.

### **Will I need to stay in Hospital?**

The need to stay in hospital depends on the extent of liposuction performed. Smaller procedures can be performed as day surgery, whereas cases with a longer operating time and larger quantities of fat removed often require a short hospital stay.

### **What are the Risks and Complications?**

All surgery has risks. There are general risks which apply to all operations as well as specific risks for individual procedures. General risks and complications of surgery may include:

- Bleeding
- Infection that may require treatment with antibiotics or further surgery in some cases
- Allergic reaction (to sutures, dressings or antiseptic solutions)
- The formation of a large blood clot (haematoma) or fluid collection (seroma) beneath the skin that may require drainage
- Pain, bruising and swelling around the operated sites
- Keloids and hypertrophic scars which present as raised, red and thickened scars over the healed incisions. These may be itchy, annoying and unsightly but are not a threat to health
- Poor or slow healing
- Wound breakdown
- Short-term nausea following general anaesthesia and other risks related to anaesthesia

Specific risks and complications associated with liposuction include:

- Irregular skin surface, uneven contours or rippling
- Asymmetric or 'baggy' skin (if the skin does not retract as expected after liposuction)
- Change in skin sensation or numbness
- Skin pigmentation changes, skin discolouration or swelling (usually temporary)
- Complications caused by the injection of anaesthetic fluid (local anaesthetic toxicity) or collection of fluid in the lungs (if too much fluid is given).
- Excessive fluid loss, which can lead to shock.
- Fluid accumulation
- Infection that develop in fatty tissues. This can be a serious complication and can be difficult to treat and require surgery to remove dead tissue.
- Friction burns or damage to the skin or nerves
- Damage to deeper structures such as nerves, blood vessels, muscles, lungs and abdominal organs
- Fat that has a poor blood supply after surgery may cause discharge from the surgical wounds or palpable lumps.

### **Where will the Surgery take place?**

Your surgery will take place in an accredited hospital facility.

### **What do I need to do Before Surgery?**

- Due to the recent cosmetic surgery reforms, all patients in Australia undergoing cosmetic surgery are required to undertake a Body Dysmorphic Disorder Questionnaire.
- You will be asked to complete a full medical history. You must list all medications you take including dietary supplements such as fish oil which increase your risk of bleeding.
- Check with your surgeon about your medications as some may need to be stopped. Any additional tests required pre-operatively will be arranged by Mr. Bunker or your anaesthetist.

- If you decide to have liposuction, you will need to sign a consent form. Make sure you read the consent form carefully before signing. If you have any questions, please ask them prior to surgery.
- Post-operative garments may need to be purchased and will be discussed at your consultation if appropriate.
- Avoid any strenuous activity or exercise in the week before your surgery
- Make sure you arrange for a relative or friend to drive you to and from the hospital and that you have arranged appropriate help at home including someone to stay with you for the first 24 hours. Think about your recovery area at home – you may want extra pillows, fluids and a toilet nearby and it is useful to have a telephone within reach.
- Consider work arrangements. Most patients will remain off work for 2 weeks after surgery. A medical certificate can be supplied to your pre-operatively if required.
- Take Vitamin C 1 gram daily starting at least 2 weeks before your surgery, unless you are allergic or unable to tolerate.
- You will receive detailed preoperative and postoperative instructions. Follow them carefully.

### **What do I need to do After Surgery?**

- Arrange for a relative or friend to drive you home and stay with you for the first night after surgery.
- You will receive medications for home (usually pain relief and antibiotics) as well as detailed postoperative instruction which include how to care for your surgical site, signs which warrant concern, contact information and follow-up instructions.
- You can usually drink fluids and eat a light meal two or three hours after surgery.
- You may have some fluid leak from the small incision sites in the first few days. If dressings become wet, please contact the rooms as per the postoperative instructions to arrange a dressing change with the nurse.
- Some bruising and swelling is normal and may take up to a few weeks to disappear.
- Dressings are to remain intact until your post-operative review.
- Any postoperative garments can be removed for showering but otherwise should stay in on.

If you experience any of the following symptoms, notify us immediately:

- Fever (>38°C) or chills
- Heavy bleeding from the incisions
- Worsening redness around the incision sites
- Increasing pain or tenderness, or other problems that appear to be worsening
- Issues with the dressings (becoming dirty, wet or loose)
- In some cases, a small, thin tube may be temporarily placed under the skin to drain any excess blood or fluid that may collect. This is usually removed in the office at your postoperative appointment or before you are discharged from the hospital.

### **Will I have Scarring?**

Any time the skin is cut it heals to form a scar. Hence visible scars are inevitable, however they are very small and usually become inconspicuous with time.

### **Will I need Revisional Surgery?**

Revisional surgery may be necessary to correct minor irregularities.

## How much does Liposuction Cost?

Cost is always a consideration in elective surgery and may include:

- Surgical fee
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Anaesthesia fees
- Prescriptions for medication
- Postsurgery garments
- Medical tests

A quote for the surgical fee is provided to you prior to surgery. This also contains instructions on how to obtain quotes for associated fees as listed above. If you have any questions, please contact the Practice Manager.

### Terms You Should Know:

- **General anaesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness. When you are under general anaesthesia you are 'asleep'.
- **Intravenous sedation:** Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to achieve relaxation. Also referred to as 'twilight' anaesthesia.
- **Local anaesthesia:** A drug injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain. Also referred to as 'numbed with needles'.
- **Liposuction:** Also called lipoplasty or lipectomy, this is the removal of fat from beneath the skin using a suction cannula.
- **Tumescent:** A mixture of saline (salt solution), local anaesthetic and adrenaline which is infiltrated into the soft tissues prior to liposuction.



Scan for our *Website*



Scan for *Patient Educational Videos*

*Daniel Bunfer*

SPECIALIST PLASTIC SURGEON