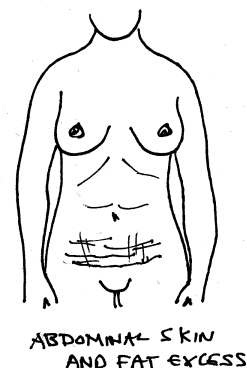


ABDOMINOPLASTY

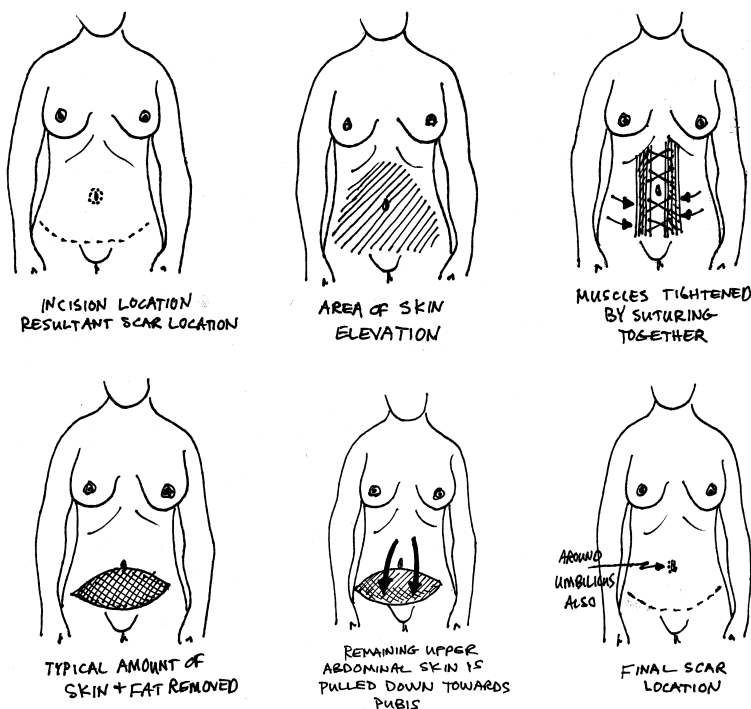
Abdominoplasty, or tummy tuck, is an operation to remove excess skin and fat tissue from the abdomen and tighten the abdominal wall muscles. The result should be a tighter, flatter stomach. Abnormalities of the abdominal wall such as hernias or split muscles, which can be seen after pregnancy, can also be addressed with this operation.

The operation will not reduce fullness in the flank area and will have no effect on the position of the breasts as these areas are outside the zones treated by this operation.

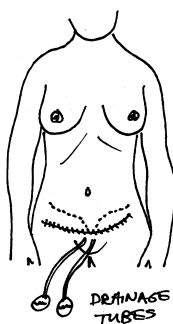


This operation requires an incision directly above the pubic region and extends outward toward the hip bones. The length will be determined by the amount of skin to be removed. The skin of the abdomen is then elevated to the level of the ribs, staying out of the actual abdominal cavity.

The abdominal muscles are then sewn together to tighten the abdominal wall.



The excess skin and fat tissue is measured and removed. The remaining skin, having been elevated and released, is pulled down towards the pubis. Sutures are then placed to close the wound. These will be removed in 5-7 days.



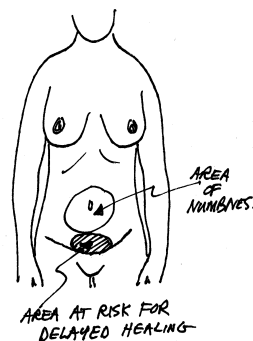
Drains will be placed beneath the skin to remove any blood or serum that may accumulate. These may stay in for 7-10 days and are easily removed in the office. You will also be placed in an abdominal “binder” to further secure the area and to lessen the amount of fluid accumulation.

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The operation may be done as day surgery with the option of spending one night in the hospital. It takes from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours and requires a general anesthetic to do the operation. The recovery time varies but usually activity is restricted for 4-6 weeks to let the area heal. This may be longer if fluid persists and requires aspiration or if wound healing problems arise.

The final abdominal contour may not be evident for several months due to swelling. Swelling is most prominent in the area just above the incision. Usually this fullness will resolve with time but if it persists, it may require a secondary procedure. This additional procedure can often be done in the office under local anesthesia. Wearing the abdominal binder will lessen the amount of swelling and hasten your recovery.

In any operation there are risks to be considered. These include bleeding, infection, numbness, pain or discomfort, widening of the scars, thick or ugly scars, areas of fullness or asymmetry, reactions to the medications or anesthetics, removal of too much or too little skin or fat and /or failure to achieve your desired appearance. Numbness of the abdominal wall will exist after the operation and may last several months. Delayed healing may also occur. This is the result of the effects of impaired blood supply (as some of the blood vessels are interrupted during elevation of the skin during mobilization) and increased tension as the skin edges are sewn together at the completion of the operation. This may take the form of blistering or, rarely, the wound may open. This opening may require additional suturing or prolonged local wound care to close the wound. The resultant scar may be wider than desired and this can be addressed with scar revision surgery if needed. Smoking, diabetes and obesity are several factors which increase the risk of this occurring. **If you smoke, you should quit 2 weeks prior and three weeks following surgery.**



Efforts will be made to reduce the risks of this operation. You must help by following all preoperative and postoperative instructions and by keeping all scheduled appointments. You must report any changes in your condition to the office so that treatment may be altered if necessary. If you smoke, your healing will be delayed and you increase the risk of a complication following your surgery. Any potential problems could result in the need for additional surgery and recovery time, time lost from work, possible hospitalization, financial loss, disappointment and/or psychological stress to you.