

Does Liposuction Permanently Remove Fat?

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This is the most commonly asked question during a liposuction consultation and the answer is ... Yes! Liposuction is one of the most commonly performed cosmetic surgery procedures worldwide and consistently ranks among the top three plastic surgery procedures along with breast augmentation and Botox injections. There are many different techniques used in performing liposuction and each of them works by removing fat from various parts of the body, commonly the abdomen, flanks, thighs, arms, double chin, and bra roll. The key thing to understand about liposuction is that it is a body contouring procedure and is not intended to be a weight-loss operation. Patients who see the best results are at a stable weight for 4-6 months prior to surgery and engaged in a regular nutrition and fitness routine.



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Fat cells in our bodies store extra calories as energy in the form of fat. There are typical fat distribution patterns for both women and men. The fat cells are relatively constant in number and just get bigger and smaller as the fat is burned to supply the body with energy. When fat cells are removed with liposuction, they are gone from that particular area forever. It is important to recognize that not 100% of fat cells are removed from an area treated with liposuction and that those remaining cells can enlarge over time with extra caloric intake. Generally, other areas of the body will store fat first if you are still taking in more calories than you are burning off. The area treated with liposuction will be largely spared significant changes in size and shape until other fat storage areas are saturated. Because liposuction is a body contouring procedure, it is very important to watch your eating and exercise habits after liposuction to enjoy the best and most durable long-term results. Surprisingly, about 20% of patients who undergo liposuction end up weighing more a year after their liposuction. Surgery is a significant investment of your time, money, and energy in recovering, so having a good nutrition and fitness plan for after your procedure is essential. Diets high in protein and low in carbohydrates work well for many people along with avoiding as much processed flour and sugar as possible.

When you visit Plastic Surgery Specialists for your liposuction consultation, we will review your medical history, your desired results from liposuction as well as your current diet and exercise habits. We have an amazing Health and Wellness Program that can assist you in getting on the right track in advance of your procedure. Many patients are already fit, eating well and are seeking a little help getting rid of trouble spots that just won't go away no matter how much they exercise or count their calories. These patients typically have isolated stubborn fat deposits in the lower abdomen, inner and outer thighs and flanks (you know, muffin tops) and do very well with targeted liposuction treatment or our non-surgical option – CoolSculpting. Other patients have a little more fluff and may desire to lose a few pounds before liposuction in order to obtain the best long-term results. This group does extremely well when enrolled in the Health and Wellness Program with the goal of establishing a healthy weight for 4-6 months before having surgery. The program offers nutrition guidance, provides healthy recipes, and can even help connect you with fitness professionals to help get you in shape to enjoy your new body.



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There are a few key components that are common to all forms of liposuction. The liposuction cannula is the thin metal tube that is used to tunnel under the skin and remove the fat when attached to a suction device. The second is tumescent solution. This is a combination of saline, local anesthetic, and epinephrine which helps reduce bleeding and bruising. The third is a controlled suction machine that allows the surgeon to regulate the intensity of the suction being used to remove fat. At Plastic Surgery Specialists, we primarily use three techniques that all complement each other. First, we use the Vaser system which uses ultrasonic energy to help break up stubborn fat deposits and makes it easier to remove the fat. Next we employ the Power Assisted Liposuction (PAL) system to remove the bulk of the fat and smooth out the treated areas to avoid divots and contour defects. For any fine tuning at the end, we use small cannulas and traditional liposuction to sculpt and define your figure and provide dramatic and stunning results. The best liposuction results come from having it performed by a board-certified plastic surgeon with years of body contouring experience – just like the surgeons at Plastic Surgery Specialists.

When you are ready to proceed with liposuction, our team will work with you to develop a treatment plan that is customized to your individual features, cosmetic goals, budget, and recovery timeline. The board-certified experts at Plastic Surgery Specialists have years of experience in body contouring procedures and will partner with you to devise the best strategy for helping you to achieve the look that you desire. If you want a bigger booty or to naturally enhance your breasts, we can collect the fat that is removed during liposuction, process it with your body's own natural growth factors and re-inject the fat into your breast or buttocks to sculpt and define your figure into optimal proportions. All of our surgical procedures are performed in our fully accredited surgery center and we employ only board-certified anesthesiologists to ensure your safety during the procedure.

After your liposuction procedure you will experience some swelling, bruising, and soreness that lasts about a week. The bruising can take up to two weeks to fully resolve so it is important to plan your recovery to allow adequate time for healing. It is critical to wear your compression garment after liposuction so that firm, even pressure is applied over the treated areas. This helps the swelling go down and makes sure that there aren't any uneven areas that may show up as small contour irregularities later. Returning to work after liposuction is covered in another blog post. If you are contemplating liposuction prior to a special event such as a wedding, class reunion, or vacation, you should plan to have your procedure at least 3-4 months prior to the event to allow your body time to heal and for the swelling to fully resolve.

When you are doing your research on liposuction it is important to examine your surgeon's credentials, the facility where the procedure will be performed and what exactly is included in the price quote. At Plastic Surgery Specialists, all of our surgeons have been certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery for years and we take pride in offering tremendous value in our liposuction procedures. The price quote that you receive is comprehensive and includes the surgery, anesthesia, the facility fees, one postoperative compression garment as well as a complimentary V-Shape treatment that helps resolve the swelling and hastens the tightening of loose skin. We will be with you every step of the way and there are never any hidden charges. Many patients are surprised when they go in to see providers who advertise deeply discounted liposuction only to realize that the advertisement is just a gimmick to get people in the doors and the real costs soon add up. We offer convenient financing plans that make surgery affordable to everyone.

We know that you are busy, so we have virtual consultations using our cutting-edge TouchMD software. This platform is fully encrypted and HIPAA compliant so that you may rest assured that your private information and photographs remain confidential. By pairing TouchMD and Zoom, we are able to conduct high quality consultations and make connecting with us to start your liposuction journey with us easier than ever.

We look forward to taking care of you at PSS – Marin County and the greater San Francisco Bay Area's premiere plastic surgery center and medical spa. Call us at 415-925-2880 or email info@psspecialists.com to book your complimentary assessment today.