

## LIPOSUCTION

Liposuction is the aspiration of fat from an unwanted area to improve body (or face) contour. It is not a weight loss mechanism, so, for patients who desire weight loss, this is not for them.

But it is a way to contour the body in very specific areas. The most common areas are, from head to toe, under the neck; the chest, particularly in men; the back rolls, belly, flanks, lower back, thighs, and sometimes even the knees, believe it or not.

Step one for liposuction is infiltrating the area with a solution that reduces pain and bleeding (called tumescent). The second step of liposuction, depending on the technique, is either using a Vaser (r), which helps melt the fat, or liposuction itself with a cannula (through small incisions).

Traditional liposuction includes tumescence of fluid in an area followed suctioning whereby a cannula is attached to negative pressure to suck out fat, basically.

The procedure itself does not hurt, naturally, if one is asleep, but also if we tumesce the area appropriately with numbing medication (it can be comfortable while one is awake).

Afterwards, it does hurt, and it is one of the procedures that probably hurts the most actually in the scheme of different procedures. Pain will probably last a few days. There could be significant bruising and swelling that can persist for months, which is why it is imperative that patient stay wrapped and compliant with the wraps (garment wear) to both create a nice uniform distribution of pressure to improve symmetrical contour and reduce swelling for quicker recovery.

The right candidate gets fantastic results. The wrong candidate gets terrible results and that is the biggest problem with liposuction: determining the right person. And, in my feeling, I think it is overdone in lot of patients (meaning, too many of the wrong patients are having liposuction).

One of the things we have to consider in evaluating who is the appropriate candidate is, one, have they been weight stable? If they haven't been weight stable in six months and if they are fluctuating up and down, their outcome is going to be suboptimal.

Two, if they are weight stable, what is the weight? While there is no magic number or perfect BMI (body mass index, do you know yours?), generally people that are really overweight benefit less from liposuction and should probably try to lose weight first before we contour, because this is not a global aspiration of fat, this is very localized for contour correction and enhancement.

The other thing is skin laxity, and this is the big problem (when it comes to poor outcomes). If men and women have very loose skin in certain areas, the medial thigh being one of the most notorious for doing terribly with liposuction, then they are going to

have a bad outcome with loose skin, irregularities, and that sort of thing. So, I think the diagnosis which is, you know, who is the appropriate candidate, is probably the most important thing in liposuction, of course, second, the technique.

**TAKE HOME POINT:** Liposuction is not for everyone, particularly those with loose skin or significant global fat.