

Liposuction Complication Checklist

Please read Ms Nugent's Liposuction information leaflet and the other information leaflets and/or booklets that you have received in full. Then please read through and initial beside each point in the complication checklist for your procedure below to indicate that you are aware of and understand each potential risk or complication. Once completed and any questions answered, please sign and date at the end of the last page.

IMPORTANT:

Ms Nugent must receive this completed paperwork **prior to your date of surgery**.

Early complications (within the first week of surgery)

Bleeding (haematoma)

It is common to have some mild oozing from the surgical incisions for a few days following liposuction. If there is any suggestion that excessive bleeding after liposuction surgery has occurred, you may need to go back to the operating theatre to have the bleeding stopped and the wound washed out to evacuate the collected blood. This is very rare.

Patient initials

Infection

Rates of severe infection in liposuction are low. Minor wound infections or inflammation may occur - if it does happen, an infection will be treated with antibiotics. Rarely, a return to the operating theatre to wash out the wound might be required.

Patient initials

Blood clots

Blood clots in the veins of the legs (DVT - deep venous thrombosis) are rare after liposuction. Preventative measures are taken (such as calf compression stockings) if you are having a general anaesthetic. If a DVT does develop, you will need various investigations and treatment as appropriate. The risk can be reduced further by drinking plenty of water postoperatively and gently mobilising. A pulmonary embolus (PE) describes a blood clot that has broken off from the DVT and lodged in the blood vessels in the lungs. This can be serious (at times, fatal), and again, appropriate investigations and treatment are instigated should this be suspected after your operation.

Patient initials

Fat embolism

This is a rare complication of liposuction where fat can enter the blood stream and travel to other sites in the body. If the fat travels to the lungs and causes blockages there, it can have very serious implications for breathing and the heart and lungs. This can be fatal.

Patient initials

Perforation of the abdominal wall and internal organ damage

Specific to abdominal liposuction – there is a rare but serious risk of perforation of the abdominal wall, which can lead to internal organ such as bowel or bladder damage. While this is extremely rare, it can be serious and would require treatment with antibiotics and in a severe case, a further procedure by a general surgeon to correct this.

Patient initials

Perforation of the chest wall and internal organ damage

Specific to chest liposuction - the rare but serious complication of perforation of the chest wall, which can lead to internal organ such as lung damage. While this is extremely rare, it can be serious and would require treatment with antibiotics and at times a further procedure e.g. insertion of a chest drain to correct this.

Patient initials

Too extensive a procedure

When fat and fluid are removed, your body reacts by sending fluid from your circulation to the area. If too large an amount is removed this can lead to low blood pressure and the need for intravenous fluid support. For this reason most surgeons limit the amount of fat that they will remove in one procedure. This is a very rare occurrence as Ms Nugent will have planned your surgery with your safety and well-being at the forefront of her mind. The amount of fat removed will be monitored throughout the procedure.

Patient initials

Intermediate complications (within 6 weeks of surgery)

Delayed wound healing

In some people the wounds take longer to heal than in others: this may be due to having had a mild infection of the wound, due to a reaction with the stitches or from "overdoing it" straight after surgery. Normally this is a minor inconvenience, which can be managed with observation or special dressings as an outpatient. Occasionally it can lead to a troublesome infection developing as described above.

Patient initials

Wound dehiscence

Occasionally an incision can open or gape. This is normally only a very small area and can be managed by observation and wound care. It usually does not leave any lasting problems. Rarely, the wound may need to be resutured.

Patient initials

Persistent swelling

Some swelling to the liposuctioned areas is normal after a liposuction operation. Most of the swelling usually resolves during the first 6 weeks after surgery. In some cases it can be more severe and persist longer than usual.

Patient initials

Asymmetries and irregularities

While no-one is perfectly symmetrical, and no two sides of the body are 100% symmetrical, every effort will be made to achieve good symmetry after your surgery. However, there will inevitably be subtle differences between each side. Occasionally there are significant asymmetries and irregularities that need to be addressed with further surgery (a revision operation).

Patient initials

Numbness or hypersensitivity

The skin of the liposuctioned area may be numb or over sensitive in the aftermath of surgery. The feeling usually normalises eventually but can take several weeks or even months in some cases. Occasionally normal sensation does not return completely.

Patient initials

Late complications (more than 6 weeks from surgery)

Poor scar formation

Scarring will occur whenever the skin is cut and of course, every effort is made to place scar lines where they will heal well and be least visible. Although scarring on average is minimal, scar maturation varies from person to person and occurs over 6 to 12 months, with scars passing through a red, itchy and lumpy phase, prior to settling down to thinner, softer less distinct lines. Normally the scars from liposuction surgery heal well and are barely perceptible but occasionally, they may tend to thicken and may require steroid injections to help them settle down. In some cases, minor surgical scar revision surgery may be needed. Hypertrophic or keloid scars can occasionally occur – these are thickened and lumpy scars that are more common in people of Asian or Afro-Caribbean descent. Occasionally a stretched or indented scar may form.

Patient initials

Loose skin

The skin may fail to snap back especially if a large amount of fat is removed. If this fails to settle, it is usually only corrected by skin excision procedures e.g. in the abdomen, an abdominoplasty or tummy tuck procedure. Pre-existing loose skin, skin with poor tone or elasticity, skin with stretch marks, skin after large weight loss and older skin are at higher risk of loose skin after liposuction.

Patient initials

Contour irregularities

Occasionally small contour irregularities can become apparent after liposuction. Sometimes these settle with time and tissue massage. Rarely, further surgery (liposuction or lipofilling) is necessary to correct this.

Patient initials

Chronic pain

Occasionally patients suffer from chronic pain after surgery. This is not always predictable or easily treated. It is more likely to occur if you suffer from severe or complex pain prior to your surgery. Further surgery or referral to a pain specialist may be indicated in this situation although it must be appreciated that there is not always a surgical solution to chronic pain.

Patient initials

The sub-optimal result

Despite performing the operation as accurately and carefully as possible, some people will feel that their result is not exactly as they were hoping it would be. This may be due to one of the problems described above occurring or due to unrealistic expectations of the surgery e.g. mild asymmetries, some residual fatty tissue or less than expected definition of the liposuctioned area or due to weight gain after having liposuction surgery. It is important that you discuss your expectations in advance of the surgery so that you can understand what to realistically expect from the surgery in your particular case and so this situation is avoided as much as possible. (Additional costs may be incurred for further procedures.) Should you be left with a sub-optimal result, this will be discussed with you along with the subsequent appropriate treatment options. Treatment may include revision surgery.

Patient initials

Other points about liposuction surgery

Changes in weight following liposuction

The fat cells that are removed during liposuction are permanently removed. However, the remaining fat cells can increase or decrease in size if you gain or lose weight. It is important to realise that if you gain weight after liposuction, you can regain it in the areas treated by liposuction as before or in a slightly different pattern of weight gain than before. This is why liposuction is best viewed as a body contouring rather than a weight loss procedure and best performed when you are at a stable weight with no further weight changes planned.

Patient initials

Stretch marks and scars

Existing stretch marks and scars will not be removed by liposuction.

Patient initials

Ageing

The natural ageing process of the body continues regardless of surgery and so may over time alter your body shape and skin tone and laxity.

Patient initials

Amount of fat removal possible

Not all fat can be removed with liposuction. Some fat remains behind in liposuctioned areas and this gives a smoother contour afterwards. There are also safety limits regarding overall amount of fat that is safe to remove in one sitting. The exact limit that is safe to remove can vary from person to person depending on their size and weight and any medical conditions that they may have. Internal/visceral body fat e.g. inside the abdomen around your bowel or liver cannot be removed by liposuction.

Patient initials

COVID-19 measures

As well as the standard process to ensure you are ready for treatment and to plan treatment, there are likely to be additional requirements due to COVID-19. You will need to undertake a COVID-19 screening questionnaire and follow the safety measures and protocols that are in place in the clinic and hospitals. Other measures that may be considered in some situations are a COVID-19 test, self-isolation in advance of treatment and during the early recovery period. You must also consider the risk of contracting COVID-19 around the time of your treatment and how this might affect you. Contracting COVID-19 during or after a time you have undergone a general anaesthetic or significant surgery may lead to a worse or more protracted course of illness than if you had not undergone the surgery.

Patient initials

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the nature of a liposuction operation. I have read the information leaflet provided to me and I understand the potential risks and complications associated with this procedure.

I agree to follow the postoperative care instructions given to me, including attendance at the postoperative follow up appointments, compliance with instructions to stop smoking/nicotine products (when relevant) and cessation of exercise and heavy lifting during the recovery after surgery.

I agree to communicate any concerns I may have in a timely manner and to inform Ms Nugent of any changes in my health or circumstances that may affect my suitability for, or recovery from liposuction surgery.

Occasionally during surgery, unexpected events can occur or there are unexpected findings which affect or prevent performing the planned surgery or require adjusting of the surgical plan or procedure. Should this happen, Ms Nugent and/or the operating room team will carry out any emergency treatment required and will adhere as much as possible to the planned surgery if safe to do so. If this should occur, you will be informed of this, any consequences of this and if any further treatment or assessment is required at the earliest opportunity.

I acknowledge that no guarantee has been given to me as to the result that may be obtained or maintained. I understand this will depend on several factors including but not limited to my pre-existing health, my body weight, skin and tissue type, the procedure chosen and performed, how my body heals during the recovery period, my lifestyle and if a complication occurs.

I agree that the procedure(s), recovery, after care, expected results, potential risks and complications and alternative treatments have been explained to me in a way that I understand.

I understand that I have the option of not undertaking any surgery at all.

Patient signature Date

Patient name