

Informed Consent - Thigh Lift Surgery

INSTRUCTIONS

This is an informed-consent document that has been prepared to help inform you about thigh lift surgery, its risks, and alternative treatments.

It is important that you read this information carefully and completely. Please sign the consent for surgery as proposed by your plastic surgeon.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A medial thigh lift is a surgical procedure to remove excess skin and fatty tissue from the medial thighs. A medial thigh lift is not a surgical treatment for being overweight. Obese individuals who intend to lose weight should postpone all forms of body contouring surgery until they have reached a stable weight.

There are a variety of different techniques used by plastic surgeons for a medial thigh lift. A medial thigh lift can be combined with other forms of body-contouring surgery, including suction-assisted lipectomy, or performed at the same time with other elective surgeries. Your surgery may require the transfusion of blood products; however, this varies on a case-by-case basis.

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS

A medial thigh lift is an elective surgical operation. Alternative forms of management consist of not treating the areas of loose skin and fatty deposits. Suction-assisted lipectomy surgery may be a surgical alternative to a medial thigh lift if there is good skin tone and localized fatty deposits in an individual of normal weight. Diet and exercise regimens may be of benefit in the overall reduction of excess body fat and contour improvement. Risks and potential complications are also associated with alternative surgical forms of treatment.

RISKS OF MEDIAL THIGH LIFT SURGERY

Every surgical procedure involves a certain amount of risk and it is important that you understand these risks and the possible complications associated with them. In addition, every procedure has limitations. An individual's choice to undergo a surgical procedure is based on the comparison of the risk to potential benefit. Although the majority of patients do not experience these complications, you should discuss each of them with your plastic surgeon to make sure you understand all possible consequences of a medial thigh lift.

Bleeding- It is possible, though unusual, to experience a bleeding episode during or after surgery. Intraoperative blood transfusions may be required. Should post-operative bleeding occur, it may require an emergency treatment to drain the accumulated blood or blood transfusion. Do not take any aspirin or anti-inflammatory medications for 2 weeks before surgery, as this may increase the risk of bleeding. Non-prescription "herbs" and dietary supplements can increase the risk of surgical bleeding. Hematoma can occur at any time following injury. If blood transfusions are needed to treat blood loss, there is a risk of blood-related infections such as hepatitis and HIV (AIDS). Heparin

medications that are used to prevent blood clots in veins can produce bleeding and decreased blood platelets.

Infection- Infection is unusual after surgery. Should an infection occur, additional treatment including antibiotics, hospitalization, or additional surgery may be necessary.

Change in Skin Sensation- It is common to experience diminished (or loss) of skin sensation in areas that have had surgery. Diminished (or complete loss of skin sensation) may not totally resolve after a medial thigh lift.

Skin Contour Irregularities- Contour and shape irregularities and depressions may occur after a medial thigh lift. Visible and palpable wrinkling of skin can occur. Residual skin irregularities at the ends of the incisions or "dog ears" are always a possibility as is skin pleating, when there is excessive redundant skin. This may improve with time, or it can be surgically corrected.

Skin Discoloration / Swelling- Bruising and swelling normally occurs following medial thigh lift. The skin in or near the surgical site can appear either lighter or darker than surrounding skin. Although uncommon, swelling and skin discoloration may persist for long periods of time and, in rare situations, may be permanent.

Skin Sensitivity- Itching, tenderness, or exaggerated responses to hot or cold temperatures may occur after surgery. Usually this resolves during healing, but in rare situations it may be chronic.

Sutures- Most surgical techniques use deep sutures. You may notice these sutures after your surgery. Sutures may spontaneously poke through the skin, become visible or produce irritation that requires removal.

Fat Necrosis- Fatty tissue found deep in the skin might die. This may produce areas of firmness within the skin. Additional surgery to remove areas of fat necrosis may be necessary. There is the possibility of contour irregularities in the skin that may result from fat necrosis.

Sensation of Thigh Tightness- After lifting the thigh skin, there can be a sensation of the thigh skin being tight. Usually this feeling subsides over time. Additional surgery may be required to correct this problem.

Damage to Deeper Structures- There is the potential for injury to deeper structures including, nerves, blood vessels, muscles, and lungs (pneumothorax) during any surgical procedure. The potential for this to occur varies according to the type of procedure being performed. Injury to deeper structures may be temporary or permanent.

Pubic Region Distortion- It is possible, though unusual, for women to develop distortion of their labia or public area. Should this occur, additional treatment including surgery may be necessary.

Scarring- All surgery leaves scars, some more visible than others. Although good wound healing after a surgical procedure is expected, abnormal scars may occur within the skin and deeper tissues. Scars may be unattractive and of different color than surrounding skin. Scar appearance may also vary within the same scar, exhibit contour variations and "bunching" due to the amount of excess skin.

Scars may be asymmetrical (appear different between right and left side of the body). There is the possibility of visible marks in the skin from sutures. In some cases scars may require surgical revision or treatment.

Surgical Anesthesia- Both local and general anesthesia involve risk. There is the possibility of complications, injury, and even death from all forms of surgical anesthesia or sedation.

Major Wound Separation- Wounds may separate after surgery. Should this occur, additional treatment including surgery may be necessary.

Asymmetry- Symmetrical body appearance may not result from a medial thigh lift. Factors such as skin tone, fatty deposits, skeletal prominence, and muscle tone may contribute to normal asymmetry in body features. Most patients have differences between the right and left side of their body before any surgery is performed. Additional surgery may be necessary to attempt to improve asymmetry.

Delayed Healing- Wound disruption or delayed wound healing is possible. Some areas of the abdomen, flank, back, or buttocks may not heal normally and may take a long time to heal. Some areas of skin may die. This may require frequent dressing changes or further surgery to remove the non-healed tissue. **Smokers have a greater risk of skin loss and wound healing complications.**

Allergic Reactions- In rare cases, local allergies to tape, suture materials and glues, blood products, topical preparations or injected agents have been reported. Serious systemic reactions including shock (anaphylaxis) may occur to drugs used during surgery and prescription medications. Allergic reactions may require additional treatment.

Seroma- Fluid accumulations infrequently occur in between the skin and the abdominal wall, legs, flank, back, or buttocks. Should this problem occur, it may require additional procedures for drainage of fluid.

Shock- In rare circumstances, your surgical procedure can cause severe trauma, particularly when multiple or extensive procedures are performed. Although serious complications are infrequent, infections or excessive fluid loss can lead to severe illness and even death. If surgical shock occurs, hospitalization and additional treatment would be necessary.

Tumescent Solutions- There is the possibility that large volumes of fluid containing dilute local anesthetic drugs and epinephrine that is injected into fatty deposits during surgery may contribute to fluid overload or systemic reaction to these medications. Additional treatment including hospitalization may be necessary.

Pain- You will experience pain after your surgery. Pain of varying intensity and duration may occur and persist after a medial thigh lift. Chronic pain may occur very infrequently from nerves becoming trapped in scar tissue after a medial thigh lift.

Unsatisfactory Result- Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied, on the results that may be obtained. You may be disappointed with the results of medial thigh lift surgery. This would include risks such as asymmetry, unsatisfactory or highly visible surgical scar location, unacceptable visible deformities, bunching and rippling in the skin near the

suture lines or at the ends of the incisions (dog ears), poor healing, wound disruption, and loss of sensation. It may not be possible to correct or improve the effects of surgical scars. Additional surgery may be required to improve results.

Persistent Swelling (Lymphedema) - Persistent swelling in the legs can occur following medial thigh lift surgery.

Deep Venous Thrombosis, Cardiac and Pulmonary Complications- Surgery, especially longer procedures, may be associated with the formation of, or increase in, blood clots in the venous system. Pulmonary complications may occur secondarily to both blood clots (pulmonary emboli), fat deposits (fat emboli) or partial collapse of the lungs after general anesthesia. Pulmonary and fat emboli can be life-threatening or fatal in some circumstances. Air travel, inactivity and other conditions may increase the incidence of blood clots traveling to the lungs causing a major blood clot that may result in death. It is important to discuss with your physician any past history of blood clots, swollen legs or the use of high estrogen birth control pills that may contribute to this condition. Cardiac complications are a risk with any surgery and anesthesia, even in patients without symptoms. Should any of these complications occur, you may require hospitalization and additional treatment. If you experience shortness of breath, chest pains, or unusual heart beats, seek medical attention immediately.

ADDITIONAL ADVISORIES

Long-Term Results- Subsequent alterations in the appearance of your body may occur as the result of aging, sun exposure, weight loss, weight gain, pregnancy, menopause or other circumstances not related to your surgery.

Metabolic Status Of Massive Weight Loss Patients- Your personal metabolic status of blood chemistry and protein levels may be abnormal following massive weight loss and surgical procedures to make a patient lose weight. Individuals with abnormalities may be a risk for serious medical and surgical complications, including delayed wound healing, infection or even in rare cases, death.

Female Patient Information- It is important to inform your plastic surgeon if you use birth control pills, estrogen replacement, or if you believe you may be pregnant. Many medications including antibiotics may neutralize the preventive effect of birth control pills, allowing for conception and pregnancy.

Intimate Relations After Surgery- Surgery involves coagulating of blood vessels and increased activity of any kind may open these vessels leading to a bleed, or hematoma. Activity that increases your heart rate or blood pressure may cause additional bruising, swelling, and the need for return to surgery and control bleeding. It is wise to refrain from sexual activity until your physician states it is safe.

PATIENT COMPLIANCE

Follow all physician instructions carefully; this is essential for the success of your outcome. It is important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, swelling, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Personal and vocational activity needs to be restricted. Protective

dressings and drains should not be removed unless instructed by your plastic surgeon. Successful post-operative function depends on both surgery and subsequent care. Physical activity that increases your heart rate or blood pressure may cause bruising, swelling, fluid accumulation and the need for return to surgery. It is wise to refrain from intimate physical activities after surgery until your physician states it is safe. It is important that you participate in follow-up care, return for aftercare, and promote your recovery after surgery.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Most health insurance companies exclude coverage for cosmetic surgical operations such as a medial thigh lift or any complications that might occur from surgery. Please carefully review your health insurance subscriber information or contact your insurance company for a detailed explanation of their policies for covering medial thigh lift procedures. **Most insurance plans exclude coverage for secondary or revisionary surgery.**

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The cost of surgery involves several charges for the services provided. The total includes fees charged by your surgeon, the cost of surgical supplies, anesthesia, laboratory tests, and possible outpatient hospital charges, depending on where the surgery is performed. Depending on whether the cost of surgery is covered by an insurance plan, you will be responsible for necessary co-payments, deductibles, and charges not covered. The fees charged for this procedure do not include any potential future costs for additional procedures that you elect to have or require in order to revise, optimize, or complete your outcome. Additional costs may occur should complications develop from the surgery. Secondary surgery or hospital day-surgery charges involved with revision surgery will also be your responsibility. **In signing the consent for this surgery/procedure, you acknowledge that you have been informed about its risk and consequences and accept responsibility for the clinical decisions that were made along with the financial costs of all future treatments.**

DISCLAIMER

Informed-consent documents are used to communicate information about the proposed surgical treatment of a disease or condition along with disclosure of risks and alternative forms of treatment(s), including no surgery. The informed-consent process attempts to define principles of risk disclosure that should generally meet the needs of most patients in most circumstances.

However, informed-consent documents should not be considered all-inclusive in defining other methods of care and risks encountered. Your plastic surgeon may provide you with additional or different information which is based on all the facts in your particular case and the current state of medical knowledge.

Informed-consent documents are not intended to define or serve as the standard of medical care. Standards of medical care are determined on the basis of all of the facts involved in an individual case and are subject to change as scientific knowledge and technology advance and as practice patterns evolve.

It is important that you read the above information carefully and have all of your questions answered before signing the consent.

