

BODY CONTOURING SURGERY:

Brachioplasty (Arm Lift), Thigh Lift, Upper Back & Lower Back (Buttock) Lift

What to Expect

OPERATION DURATION

This operation is performed under general anaesthetic and usually takes 3-4 hours (per body area.)

HOSPITAL STAY

You will be in the hospital for 1 - 2 nights, depending on your recovery. Everyone is different, and your recovery will be tailored to you.

Dr Taylor will not be in to visit you every day whilst you are in the hospital. He will phone your nurses for daily updates and provide over-the-phone instructions. He will come in to see you if you have any issues.

What Complications May Occur After This Procedure?

GENERAL POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF ANY PROCEDURE

- Bleeding
- Infection at the surgical site
- Allergic reaction to equipment, materials or medication
- Blood clot in your leg or lungs
- Acute kidney injury
- Poor scarring - hypertrophic or keloid

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF THIS PROCEDURE

- Lump developing under your wound caused by blood collecting (haematoma) that may require further surgery
- Excess fluid accumulating under the skin (seroma) may require draining
- Slow-healing wounds or areas of fat necrosis that may require regular dressings for an extended period
- Skin necrosis, where some of the skin at the edge of your wound dies and leaves a black area
- Wound healing problems - wound has delayed healing and may open up (dehiscence)
- Numbness or continued pain around the scars
- Restrictive movement to the tightened skin
- Asymmetry

SPECIFIC POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS OF THIS PROCEDURE

Thigh Lift Only

- Distortion of the genitalia's contour and appearance, especially in women

Lower Back / Buttock Lift Only

- Irregular skin surface, uneven contours or rippling
- Asymmetry (unevenness) of the buttocks

CONSEQUENCES OF THIS PROCEDURE

- Pain, bruising and swelling
- Visible scars

How to Prepare for Your Procedure

HOW LONG SHOULD YOU BOOK OFF WORK

This depends on your profession - If you work in an office/ non-strenuous job 1-2 weeks. However, this will depend on how physically demanding your job is, so please discuss it with Dr Taylor or our nurse.

Please email admin@drduncantaylor.com.au if you require a medical certificate.

SUPPORT GARMENT

You will need to purchase a post-surgery compression garment:

Brachioplasty - Arm garments

Lower Back / Buttock or Thigh Lift - Knee-length compression shorts

Upper Back - No garment needed

Please bring these into the hospital with you on the day of surgery.

Wear your garments 24/7 for 6 weeks (including in the hospital) you can remove the garments to shower.

Our clinic will provide information to you on the specific garment you will require.

FASTING

You are required to fast for General Anaesthesia.

You cannot have any food or fluids (including lollies, chewing gum) 6 hours prior to your surgery.

You can have some sips of water only up to 2 hours before your surgery and then nothing after this time.

If you take regular medication, please check with our nurse to see if you should be taking your medication in the lead-up to/on the day of your surgery. Some medications should be withheld.

PRE-OP WASH

Please purchase a pre-op chlorhexidine wash from the pharmacy. Use this whilst showering, the night before and the morning of your surgery.

MORNING OF SURGERY

You will be asked to arrive at the hospital approximately 2 hours prior to your surgery start time. Our Practice Manager will provide you with your admission information, including time and where to go, 1-2 weeks before your surgery date.

Dr Taylor will see you in the pre-operative area before you go into theatre. He will mark out the site for your surgery. This process must be completed whilst you are awake, as he requires you to be standing.

DRAINS

You may have drains inserted into your wounds immediately post-op. If this is the case, these will usually be removed before your hospital discharge.

Post-Operative Instructions

ACTIVITY

You can get up and move the same day after your surgery once you have recovered from your general anaesthetic.

In the initial 2-3 weeks following your surgery, we would like you to rest the area of your body as much as possible to assist with your wound healing and prevention of seroma. Pottering around the house is fine, though do not start going for walks, doing housework, etc. during this time.

After 3 weeks, you can start some short/slow walks and slowly increase from 3 - 6 weeks post-op.

Please do not do any strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting over 10 kg for 4-6 weeks. You can drive once you safely feel able to maneuver a vehicle. For most patients this is approximately 2 weeks.

PAIN RELIEF

You should not be in significant pain after your surgery. Your anaesthetist will prescribe regular pain relief for on the ward post-surgery. If you have pain on top of this, you should ask for additional pain medication, which will be prescribed on your drug chart should you need it.

You will not be discharged from the hospital until your pain is well managed on oral medications. Please take paracetamol regularly and your stronger pain relief, if required. If you have severe pain that is not responding to the pain relief, please phone our nurse during office hours.

Please do not put ice packs or heat packs on your wounds.

Do not take aspirin.

ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES

You will be prescribed some anti-inflammatories whilst you are in hospital, and you will also be discharged with some. Please take the entire course, even if you are not in pain. Please take this medication as prescribed on the box by your anaesthetist.

ANTIBIOTICS

You may be given a 5 days course of oral antibiotics.

BLEEDING

If the wound starts to bleed, please apply firm pressure for 15 minutes. If a dressing is in place, please do this over the top of the dressing (do not remove the dressing).

This should control the bleeding. However, if it is not easily controlled or does not subside, please phone our nurse specialist during working hours, go to an after-hours GP clinic or visit an emergency department.

INFECTION

If your wound becomes hot, swollen, oozes pus, or you are spiking temperatures, the wound may be infected. Please phone our nurse immediately within business hours or attend your GP, after-hours GP or Emergency.

REMOVAL OF SUTURES

Sutures used during these procedures do not require removing and they will dissolve on their own.

WOUND & DRESSING CARE

Your wounds will be covered with surgical tape and glue, this is waterproof, and you can shower as usual and pat dry. This dressing will start to peel off on its own after approximately 3-4 weeks. At this stage, you can gently peel the dressing off.

If you have a standard dressing on over the top of this tape, please sponge bath around these to avoid getting the dressing wet and leave intact until you are seen in the nurse dressing clinic 5-10 days post-op.

Do not immerse the wound in water, i.e.. swimming or having a bath for 6 weeks, or until the wound is completely healed.

Bruising takes around 2-3 weeks to resolve, and swelling can take up to 3-6 months to resolve completely.

MASSAGING FOR SCAR REDUCTION

Commence massaging your scars once your dressings are removed, and wounds have healed – approximately 3-4 weeks post-op.

It is recommended that you massage your scars with a good moisturiser (e.g. Sorbolene or QV) or Bio-Oil for 2 minutes, twice daily. Wipe off any excess product, then apply either:

- A silicone gel (e.g. Strataderm), which dries to form a protective film over the scar, or
- Silicone tape.

Continue this treatment for 3–6 months.

LYMPHATIC MASSAGE

We recommend 2-3 sessions of lymphatic massage to assist with the removal of post-operative fluid / swelling. This can commence once you are feeling more comfortable, approximately 3 weeks post-surgery. We advise 2-3 sessions, 1 week apart.

Other Useful Tips

The power outlet in your hospital room is often quite far away from your bed. We suggest bringing a long charging cable for your phone so that you can keep it within reach.

Follow-Up

Dr Taylor will be in contact with the nurses looking after you on the ward. If you are well post-op he will discharge you after speaking with your nurse over the phone. He will only come in to see you on the ward if you are having any issues.

If you are concerned at all or have any questions, please phone our clinic to speak with our practice nurse.

Follow up appointments:

- 5-10 days after your procedure, post-surgery wound check in our nurse clinic.
- 10-14 days nurse clinic if required.
- 6 weeks post-surgery review in Dr Duncan Taylor's day clinic.