

Mommy Makeover

Many women experience significant physical changes following pregnancy and breast-feeding, many of which can be persistent and difficult to correct with diet and exercise alone. Changes to the volume and shape of the breasts, stretch marks and sagging of the abdominal skin, as well as fat accumulation on the hips, thighs, and love handles are all common results of pregnancy and nursing. A mommy makeover offers women who are dissatisfied with these changes, the opportunity to restore their pre-pregnancy appearances.

A mommy makeover refers to a combination of plastic surgery procedures that are chosen by you and your surgeon in order to address the changes to your post-pregnancy body. The most commonly performed procedures during a mommy makeover include breast augmentation, breast lift with or without implants, breast reduction, full or mini tummy tuck, and liposuction. However, there are many additional treatments such as thigh lift or cosmetic injections that can be performed during a mommy makeover, depending upon your specific concerns. This animation will focus on breast augmentation, full tummy tuck, and liposuction of the outer thighs.





Introduction

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Surgery Preparation

During an initial consultation, your surgeon will discuss your post-pregnancy body goals and procedure options. When discussing the areas of your body that you would like to improve, it is important for you to be as specific as possible so that your surgeon can advise you on the most suitable procedures for your needs. The number and variety of treatments you choose as well as your general health will determine whether your mommy makeover will be completed as one combined procedure, or as a series of surgeries performed over a greater period of time. If combined into one stage, the mommy makeover typically lasts from three to five hours, but the actual length of the surgery depends upon the number and type of procedures being performed.

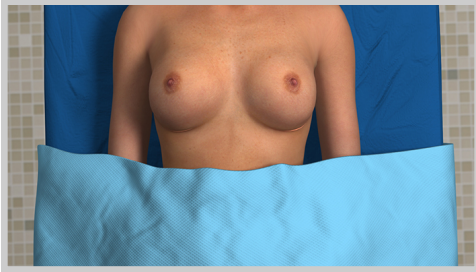
Prior to surgery, your surgeon will draw incision guidelines on your breasts, abdomen, and outer thighs. You will be placed under anesthesia. Your anesthesiologist will most likely administer general anesthesia which causes you to sleep during the procedure.



Breast Enhancement

Following pregnancy, breast appearance can be dissatisfying for many women as the physical demands of childbirth and nursing can change breast shape and volume dramatically. Some women find that their breasts sag and lose significant volume after pregnancy and breast-feeding. Depending upon the amount of remaining breast tissue, breast augmentation, a breast lift, or a breast lift with implants is necessary in order to return breasts to their pre-pregnancy state. Alternatively, some women find that their breasts are excessively large and disproportionate to their body size post-pregnancy. In these cases, a breast reduction is required in order to alleviate discomfort and achieve more balanced and shapely breasts.

This animation will focus on breast augmentation, or augmentation mammoplasty, which helps to restore breast volume and shape through the use of breast implants. To learn more about the additional breast enhancing procedures available, please see our Breast Lift, Breast Lift with Implants and Breast Reduction animations.



Breast Augmentation Procedure

An important decision involved in breast augmentation is whether to use silicone or saline implants both silicone and saline implants are available in similar shapes, sizes, and textures but they differ in the composition filling the implant. For more information about silicone and saline implants, please see our Breast Augmentation animation. Your surgeon will help you choose the proper style and size of implants based on your lifestyle, body contours, and existing amount of breast tissue in order to achieve the cup size and appearance you desire.

Breast implants can be inserted either behind the glandular tissue, known as subglandular placement or behind the muscle, known as submuscular placement. This animation depicts subglandular placement, in which the breast implant is placed in a pocket formed beneath the breast tissue, but above the muscle. You should discuss the benefits of the different implant placement options in more detail with your surgeon. There are a variety of incision techniques used during a breast augmentation, depending upon the patient's specific conditions. This animation will demonstrate the inframammary incision, in which an incision is placed along the crease of the lower portion of each breast, concealing the resulting scars. If you are interested in learning about the different breast augmentation techniques, please view our Breast Augmentation animation.

Your surgeon will make an incision along the pre-marked lines. Next, the breast tissue is separated in order to create the pocket for the implant. Your surgeon will insert the implant into the pocket using fingers or a touchless device and will inspect your breasts to ensure that they are symmetric. Adjustments may be made to the pocket and the position of the breast implant in order to achieve the desired look.

Often, dissolvable internal sutures are placed in the breast tissue

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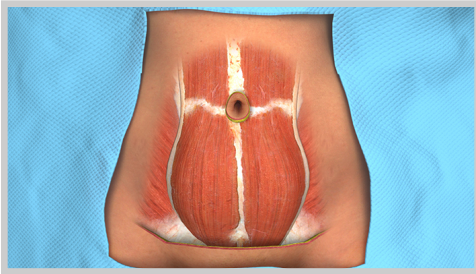
Often, dissolvable internal sutures are placed in the breast tissue to help close the incision, and some surgeons choose to close the skin using external sutures or skin adhesive as well. Before closing the incision completely, a surgical drain may be placed inside each breast to allow fluid to drain as you heal. Lastly, surgical tape or bandages are applied to protect the incision sites as you heal.



Tummy Tucks

Pregnancy can affect the abdominal area dramatically. Abdominal muscles often pull apart and can be separated permanently, requiring surgical closure and tightening to restore the abdomen to its pre-pregnancy state. Additionally, abdominal skin undergoes significant stretching during pregnancy, often resulting in stretch marks and loose, sagging skin. These conditions may persist despite proper diet and exercise, and can make the abdomen appear disproportionate with the rest of the body. A tummy tuck, or abdominoplasty, can restore the appearance of a firmer, flatter abdomen.

A full tummy tuck removes excess fat, loose skin, and stretch marks, as well as tightens the muscles in the abdominal wall. Alternatively, a mini tummy tuck concentrates on removing excess fat, loose skin, and stretch marks below the navel. This animation will explain the full tummy tuck procedure; please see our Mini Tummy Tuck animation to learn more about this alternative surgery.



Full Tummy Tuck Procedure

Following the pre-marked guidelines, your surgeon will make an incision just above the pubic area. Typically, this incision is placed low enough so that the resulting scar can be hidden easily by undergarments or a bathing suit. A second incision is made around the navel to free it from the surrounding tissue.

Next, the skin and fat layers above the abdominal wall are lifted upward to expose the abdominal muscles. Your surgeon will suture these muscles, pulling them closer together, and creating a flatter, firmer abdominal wall and a slimmer waistline.

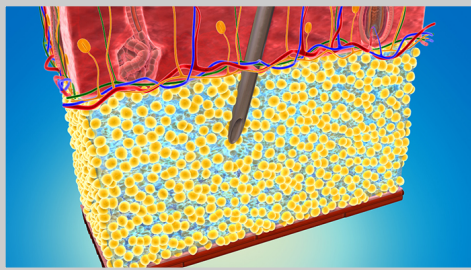
Once the muscles are tightened, the layer of skin and fat will be stretched back over the abdominal wall and the excess skin and fat that hangs below the original incision is removed. A new hole will be created for your navel. Before closing the incision, your surgeon may choose to place surgical drains below the incision to allow fluids to escape as you heal. Finally, the incisions will be sutured and bandages will be applied.



Liposuction

Often the weight gain that accompanies pregnancy can be difficult to lose afterward. Post-pregnancy, it is common for women to have excess fat accumulation on the hips, thighs, and love handles, but almost any part of the body can be affected. Most body fat is located on top of muscle tissue, just beneath the skin. Blood vessels supply the area with blood, and nerve endings provide sensation to the skin. The amount of fat that accumulates under the skin varies depending upon inherited traits, body type and lifestyle factors such as exercise and diet. Liposuction works by removing the excess fat surgically, resulting in improved contours in the desired areas.

There are a variety of liposuction techniques available, including the use of ultrasonic waves or laser light to aid fat removal. The focus of this animation is tumescent liposuction, which utilizes a special medicated fluid in order to aid fat removal with suction.



Tumescent Liposuction Procedure

Tumescent fluid is injected into the treatment area, expanding the tissues. This numbs the treatment area, minimizes bleeding, and eases the removal of fat cells.

Your surgeon will place short incisions along natural creases of your body in order to conceal the resulting scars. Next, a small tube-like device called a cannula is inserted. Using a forward and backward motion, small tunnels are created in the fat layer as the fat is removed with suction. The tunnels will collapse over the next few weeks, resulting in new contours in the specific treatment areas. Your surgeon may close your incisions with sutures, or may choose to leave them open. Absorbent pads are applied to the incision sites.



Recovery

The mommy makeover is often performed as an outpatient procedure, which means you can return home the same day. Depending upon number and type of procedures you undergo, your surgeon's preference, and your general health, it is possible that you will spend the night in the hospital or aftercare facility, returning home the day after your surgery.

You will likely need to wear compression garments on your breasts, abdomen and thighs, which help to reduce swelling by preventing fluid buildup, while providing comfort and support during your recovery. Swelling, bruising, and discomfort are normal, and you may be prescribed medication to manage your pain as you heal.

Bandages will likely be removed within the first week following surgery, while any non-dissolvable sutures are removed after one to two weeks. If present, surgical drains can remain for up to three weeks before removal. You may be instructed to wear the compression garments and to avoid excessive exertion or heavy lifting for a month or more, but is important to discuss your recovery plan with your surgeon as your healing process will depend upon your specific procedures.



Risks and Results

The risks associated with the mommy makeover are similar to those of most major operations, which include bleeding, infection, blood clots, and fluid formation. However, as each mommy makeover is different be sure to consult with your surgeon about potential complications. It important to understand that future pregnancies and significant weight changes may affect the results of your surgery.

Immediately following your surgery you will notice a dramatic difference in the size and shape of your breasts and abdomen, as well as in contours of your body. You will continue to see changes as your swelling decreases and it may take up to one year before the final results from your procedure are apparent.

Although you will have scarring from your surgery, your scars should fade considerably over time.

Patients typically experience high satisfaction with the results of a mommy makeover and with proper diet and exercise, you can enjoy those results for many years.