



When Does Liposuction Become Unsafe?

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Liposuction is a great procedure to shape your body, help with those stubborn areas and to make you more comfortable in your swimsuit. Most of the time, liposuction is a brief, safe procedure which give profound results. Liposuction is most suitable for problem areas that are resistant to changes in lifestyle. Common areas include chin (submental), arms, upper back, hips or flanks, abdomen, outer thighs, inner thighs and knees. If there is good skin tone in the area of concern it is often the best option. If there is significant skin laxity and or muscle laxity then resectional procedures such as an abdominoplasty or tummy tuck may be better. It is an outpatient procedure and usually takes 1-4 hours depending upon how much needs to be done. If large volumes (>5 liters) are removed then it may be advisable to stay overnight. A compressive garment is worn for one month after surgery. Most of the swelling resolves within the first 2 weeks but subtle improvement occurs for up to 4 months. There is not usually much restriction on activities after the procedure but staying off of your feet most of the time for 48 hours helps reduce swelling. Complications are rare in the right hands but the procedure must be done by a well trained plastic surgeon. When there is a complication, it quickly makes headlines and the press gives everyone the impression that these complications are unavoidable. While it is true that there is some risk with any procedure, regardless of how small, the risk of liposuction is minimal if performed correctly by an experienced Plastic Surgeon certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. A qualified Plastic Surgeon will make sure and discuss all of the risks with you before the procedure, they will be careful to use the appropriate amount of fluid during the procedure and will limit the

amount that is aspirated (usually 5 liters or less). Careful monitoring of your fluid status after surgery is paramount to assure a normal recovery. Significant risk is involved when someone without experience decides to do liposuction which does not have the proper knowledge or training. California recently began allowing dentists to begin performing the procedure and they have seen their complication rate increase dramatically. Make sure you are going to a qualified, board-certified plastic surgeon (by the American Board of Plastic Surgery) because your safety is too important to gamble with anyone else.

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