

PURITY BRIDGE CLINIC
PATIENT INFORMATION to Liposuction – Suction- Assisted Liposculpture (SAL)



The Procedure

Liposuction involves the removal of areas of fat accumulation through very small incisions. It is not a weight-loss procedure, but rather a procedure to address stubborn areas of fat that are hard to lose, despite exercise and a healthy diet. Common areas for liposuction include the waist (love handles), the abdomen, the hips (saddle bags) and the thighs. Other areas in which SAL may be used include the neck, knees, back, chin and buttocks.

What does it involve?

Liposuction is usually performed under general anaesthetic (with you asleep) but may be performed under local anaesthetic (with you awake) for small areas. Liposuction is performed through tiny incisions: a narrow tube is then inserted and used to suck out the fat layer that lies beneath the skin. The fat layer is broken up by the cannula whilst suction is applied. Depending upon the estimated amount of fat to be removed, it may either be done as a day case procedure (in and out of hospital the same day) or with you staying in hospital.

What are the benefits?

SAL empties out areas of fat accumulation and will improve the contours of your body. It leaves behind an empty area of loose skin which then contracts and tightens over the next 6-weeks to 3months. The procedure is most effective in younger people.

How long does the surgery take?

The length of surgery depends upon the volume of fat that is to be removed. It may take between 1-3 hours.

What is the recovery period?

Initially there will be bruising in the area of liposuction (this may last 2-4 weeks), and you may have some straw-coloured fluid oozing from the wounds. These are both temporary after-effects of liposuction. You will need to wear a supportive pressure garment for 6-weeks following the surgery to ensure there is compression at the sites of fat removal. Most people will be able to return to work at 1-2 weeks

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following surgery, but you may need longer if larger volumes have been removed. Any discomfort and pain may be relieved with painkillers and you are encouraged to gently walk after the operation.

How long before daily activity may be resumed?

Strenuous activity should be avoided for at least 2-weeks. You may be able to drive from 48-72 hours after surgery but remember that you need to be comfortable in performing an emergency stop or similar manoeuvre.

What are the success rates?

SAL has a high success rate.

What are the possible complications?

Some people can feel dizzy after the procedure, which usually settles with rest and fluid intake. The post-operative swelling may take some weeks to settle down. Under-or over-correction may occur: if an area is under-corrected it may be possible to redo the liposuction, but a period of several months after the first operation may need to elapse to allow the internal scarring and swelling to settle down. If there are any small contour irregularities from overcorrection, a combination of careful refining further liposuction with fat transfer into the area may be considered. Other complications include infection and bleeding, both of which are fortunately unusual with liposuction. Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolus (PE) are blood clots that may occur in the leg (DVT) and travel to the lung (PE) which may be very serious -fortunately they are uncommon in liposuction. A rare, but dangerous complication is the damage to internal organs by the liposuction instrument. If this were to happen, further surgery may be required to explore and repair the organs damaged. As stated, this is a very rare complication. Another unusual complication is fat embolism -fat entering the blood stream and lodges at a distant site in the body. If this is in the lungs it can be extremely serious. Fortunately, this too is rare.

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