



THE PLASTIC SURGERY CENTRE

## Informed Consent – Abdominoplasty Surgery

### Instructions

This is an informed consent document that has been prepared to help Dr. Waslen inform you of abdominoplasty, its risks as well as its alternative treatments

It is important that you read the following information carefully and completely.

### Introduction

Abdominoplasty surgery is a surgical procedure to remove excess skin and fatty tissue from the middle and lower abdomen as well as tighten the muscles of the abdominal wall; abdominoplasty 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 been able to maintain their weight loss.

There are a variety of different techniques used by plastic surgeons for abdominoplasty surgery; this surgery can be combined with other forms of body-contouring surgery including suction-assisted lipectomy. Abdominoplasty surgery can also be performed in conjunction with other elective surgeries.

### Alternative Treatments

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 abdominoplasty surgery if there is good skin tone and localized fatty deposits in an individual of normal weight.

Risks and potential complications are associated with alternative forms of treatment that involve surgery.

### Risks of Abdominoplasty Surgery

Every surgical procedure involves a certain amount of risk and it is important that you understand the risks involved with this surgery. An individual's choice to undergo a surgical procedure is based on the comparison of the risks to potential benefit. Although the majority of patients do not experience the following complications, you should discuss each of them with Dr. Waslen to make certain you understand all possible consequences of abdominoplasty surgery.

**Bleeding** – It is possible, though unlikely, that a bleeding episode may occur during or after surgery. Should post-operative bleeding occur, it might require emergency treatment to drain accumulated blood or a blood transfusion. Do not take aspirin, anti-inflammatory medications or vitamin E capsules for 2 weeks prior to surgery. These products may increase the risk of bleeding.

**Infection** – An infection is unusual following this type of surgery. Should an infection occur, treatment including antibiotics or additional surgery may be necessary.

**Change in Skin Sensation** – Temporary changes in skin sensation following Abdominoplasty can occur but usually resolve. Diminished (or complete loss of skin sensation) infrequently occur and may not totally resolve.

**Scarring** – In rare cases, abnormal scars may result. Scars may be unattractive and of a different color than the surrounding skin. Additional treatments including surgery may be necessary to treat abnormal scarring.

**Skin Contour Irregularities** – Contour irregularities and depressions in the skin may occur following Abdominoplasty. Visible and palpable wrinkling of the skin can occur. Additional treatments including surgery may be necessary to treat skin contour irregularities following Abdominoplasty.

**Asymmetry** – Symmetrical body appearance may not result from Abdominoplasty. Factors such as skin tone, fatty deposits, bony prominences and muscle tone may contribute to normal asymmetry in body features.

**Delayed Healing** – Wound disruption or delayed wound healing is possible. Some of the operative areas may heal abnormally. Some areas of the skin may die. This may require frequent dressing changes and/or further surgery to remove the unhealed tissue.

**Smokers have a greater risk of skin loss and wound healing complications.**

**Surgical Shock** – In rare circumstances, this procedure can cause severe trauma, particularly when multiple or extensive areas are suctioned simultaneously. Although serious complications are infrequent, infections or excessive fluid loss can lead to severe illness and even death. Should surgical shock occur following Abdominoplasty, hospitalization and additional treatment would be necessary.

**Pulmonary Complications** – Fat embolism syndrome occurs when fat droplets become trapped in the lungs. This is a very rare and possibly fatal complication of Abdominoplasty surgery. Should a fat embolism or other pulmonary complications occur following Abdominoplasty, additional treatment including hospitalization may be necessary.

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

**Skin Loss** –Skin loss is rare following Abdominoplasty.

**Seroma** – Fluid accumulations infrequently occur in areas where surgery has been performed.

**Long Term Effects** – Subsequent alterations in body contour may occur as the result of aging, weight loss or gain, pregnancy or other circumstances unrelated to Abdominoplasty.

**Umbilicus** – Malposition, scarring, unacceptable appearance or loss of the umbilicus (navel) may occur.

**Pain** – Chronic pain may occur very infrequently due to nerves becoming trapped in scar tissue following surgery.

**Other** – You may be disappointed with the results of surgery. Infrequently, it is necessary to perform additional surgery to improve your results.

## **Health Insurance**

Most health insurance agencies exclude coverage for cosmetic operations such as liposuction or any complication that might occur following surgery. Please review your health insurance information carefully.

## **Additional Surgery**

Should complications occur, additional surgery or other treatments might be necessary. Even though risks and complications occur infrequently, the risks cited are particularly associated with Abdominoplasty surgery. Other complications and risks can occur but are even more uncommon. The practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science. Although good results are expected, there is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied on the results that may be obtained.

## **Financial Responsibilities**

The cost of surgery involves several charges for the services provided. The total amount includes fees charged by the doctor, the cost of surgical supplies, anesthesia, laboratory tests and possible outpatient hospital charges. 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. Additional costs may occur should complications develop from the surgery. Secondary surgery or hospital day surgery charges involved with revisionary surgery would also be your responsibility.