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The Finishing Touches *Body Contouring After Massive Weight Loss*



Gastric bypass surgery can be a life changing event for those with morbid obesity. Years of discomfort and unsuccessful attempts at weight loss finally come to an end!

At long last, they can live inside healthy, comfortable bodies.

However, when their weight stabilizes, a new challenge crops up: loose, sagging skin.

Skin Elasticity

Unfortunately, skin tissue can be permanently damaged from extreme stretching. Skin that won't shrink naturally on its own has to be removed through plastic surgery—it's the only option.

That's where I come in. I've undergone extensive training to help re-contour the skin of the previously obese.



My Patient

A Long Process

My patients often need multiple body contouring surgeries to fit their extra skin to their new forms. It's a long process—I often see these patients for years.

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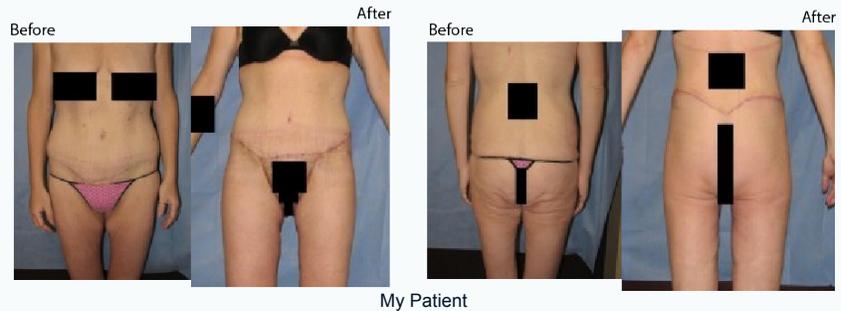
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The relationships we strike up are among the most satisfying aspects of my work.



When is it done?

- ◆ It begins about 1 to 1-1/2 years after bariatric surgery, or when weight loss has been stable for 3 to 6 months.
- ◆ Further surgery happens every 3 to 6 months, depending on how quickly patients heal.

How long does each surgery take?

- ◆ As a general rule, 3-6 hours, depending upon which areas of the body are being treated.

Where do you start?

- ◆ Patients prioritize the areas that bother them most. I follow a protocol that meets their personal needs.

Is liposuction involved?

- ◆ For some patients, I use liposuction to reduce overall bulk before I start removing skin. This type of liposuction is a science unto itself. Damaged, inelastic skin requires more tumescent fluids than conventional lipo.

Is there scarring?

- ◆ Patients are left with scars down the arms, up the legs, across the lower stomach, sometimes at the waist. Basically, anywhere there is excess skin, it can be traded for scars.
- ◆ I can place midsection scars where they'll be hidden by underwear or in a belt-like position.
- ◆ For arms and legs, I hide the scars where clothing seams would be.

Will insurance pay for it?

- ◆ Probably not. This is classified as cosmetic surgery and is not covered. Sometimes, insurance will cover abdominal surgery where there is documented skin breakdown and irritation.

What are the risks?

Massive weight loss body contouring is riskier than other types of body contouring.

Body

Contouring

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- ◆ Fluid shifts occur after large amounts of skin and fat are removed.
- ◆ Swelling is common, and in certain areas of the body (the abdomen and back) it can take months to subside.
- ◆ Because the skin has lost its elasticity, patients can sometimes have slower wound healing.

Will I lose my navel?

- ◆ Often I have to repair incisional hernias. Between that and abdominoplasty (tummy tuck surgery), I may have to move the navel. This will be discussed ahead of time.

We Will Supplement Your Nutrients

Bariatric patients often lack key nutrients after losing massive amounts of weight. Calcium and potassium are most likely to be at low levels. We check lab values at least a week before every surgery. Checking early allows time to correct deficiencies.



Am I a Candidate?

- ◆ If you're healthy and your body weight has stabilized after bariatric surgery or other massive weight loss, you are probably eligible.
- ◆ Certain medical problems *may* make you ineligible.
- ◆ We judge each case individually, taking a variety of important health-related factors into account.



Let Me Evaluate Your Case

The best way to find out whether you can begin enjoying your body again is to come in and see me. I have long experience in this field. You'll be placing yourself in expert hands.

Let me just add that I thoroughly admire people willing to undergo the discomfort of bariatric surgery. I enjoy contributing the finishing touch to their long and arduous journeys.

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