

## Specific Risks of Tummy Tuck or Abdominoplasty

Every surgical procedure involves a certain amount of risk and it is important that you understand these risks and the possible complications associated with them. In addition, every procedure has limitations. An individual's choice to undergo a surgical procedure is based on the comparison of the risk to potential benefit. Although most patients do not experience these complications, you should discuss them with your plastic surgeon at The Aesthetic Center by Kaiser Permanente to make sure you understand all possible risks of abdominoplasty.

### Change in Skin Sensation

It is common to experience diminished (or loss of) skin sensation in areas that have had surgery. For most patients, the changes in sensation improve with time. However, diminished (or loss of) skin sensation may not totally resolve after an abdominoplasty.

### Skin Contour Irregularities

Contour and shape irregularities and depressions may occur after abdominoplasty. Visible and palpable wrinkling of skin can occur. Residual skin irregularities at the ends of the incisions or "dog ears" are always a possibility as is skin pleating when there is excessive redundant skin. This may improve with time, or it can be surgically corrected.

### Major Wound Separation

Wounds may separate after surgery. Should this occur, additional treatment including surgery and even hospitalization may be necessary.

### Umbilicus

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

### Pubic Distortion

It is possible, though unusual, for women to develop distortion of their labia and pubic area. Should this occur, additional treatment including surgery may be necessary.

### Use of Drains

During your surgery, your doctor may find it necessary to place a drain(s). A drain is a small tube that drains fluid out from the area that was operated on. You will be instructed on the use of your drain. Placement of the drain may require a small separate incision. The drain will be removed when your doctor feels it is no longer necessary. The drain site may be closed at the time of drain removal. Closing the drain site may require special surgical tape or sometimes a suture. Your doctor may leave the site open to drain any residual fluid under the wound.

### Use of Fibrin Sealants "Tissue Glue"

Fibrin sealants (from heat-treated human blood components to inactivate virus transmission) may be used to hold tissue layers together at surgery and to diminish post-operative bruising following an abdominoplasty. Sealants have been carefully produced from screened donor blood plasma for hepatitis, syphilis, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). These products have been used safely for many years as sealants in cardiovascular and general surgery. These products are thought to diminish surgical bleeding and improve adherence of tissue layers.

### Scars

All surgery leaves scars, some more visible than others. Although good wound healing after a surgical procedure is expected, this surgery will result in long, prominent scars that are permanent. Abnormal scars may occur within the skin and deeper tissues. Scars may be unattractive and of different color than the surrounding skin tone. Scar appearance may also vary within the same scar. Scars may be asymmetrical (appear different on the right and left side of the body). There is the possibility of visible marks in the skin from sutures. These scars may become raised, red in the first few weeks - months, but usually settle down over time. However, some patients are prone to "hypertrophic" or "keloid" scars i.e. prominent, raised, red scars that do not settle. Further treatments with medications and/or surgery may be required.

### Injury to Deep Vital Structures

There is an inherent risk of injuring deeper vital structures including but not limited to bowel, muscles, nerves, vessels, and other intra-abdominal structures. This can result in severe infections, bleeding, breathing difficulties, organ failure and possibly death. These injuries may require additional surgical procedures and hospitalizations to treat.