

HEALTH + BEAUTY cosmetic procedures



Cosmetic *procedures*

Turn back time with the latest treatments
for a taut tummy and smooth, glowing skin

THE TUMMY TUCK

Makeover programs may be responsible for removing the stigma associated with surgical procedures like the tummy tuck. Plastic and reconstructive surgeon Dr Vij Vijayasekaran, from the Western Australian Plastic Surgery Centre, reports it to be his most commonly performed cosmetic surgery, accounting for about 60 per cent of procedures done.

What's involved

'Abdominoplasty' recontours the stomach by removing excess skin and fat from the lower abdomen, while tightening the muscle of the abdominal wall. If you're in relatively good shape, but suffer from loose abdominal skin caused by pregnancy or weight loss that doesn't respond well to diet or exercise, you may be a candidate for a tummy tuck.

"However, it's not a substitute for weight reduction and is not a cure for obesity," warns Dr Vijayasekaran. "You should keep in mind that the desired result is improvement, not perfection. Your plastic surgeon will discuss if the procedure is right for you, both physically and mentally."

The procedure is usually performed under general anaesthetic. Results are immediate and long-lasting if diet and exercise are maintained at healthy levels.

Recovery and risks

Recovery usually takes two to four weeks before you return to work, and normal activity and exercise (with no heavy lifting) can resume after four to six weeks.

Dr Vijayasekaran says post-operative treatments are becoming increasingly common in fast-tracking the healing process.

"Post-surgery, we offer patients a complimentary course of LED Photonlite Therapy, which produces excellent results. This is a simple, non-invasive way to accelerate recovery."

Risks include infection and scarring on the lower abdomen. Infection is rare and treatable with antibiotics should it occur. In most cases, scarring can be hidden inside the bikini-line where it is easily concealed with normal clothing or bathers. Scarring may take up to 12 months to flatten and lighten in colour.

Cost

Approximately \$5000 (plus anaesthetic and hospital costs), partially covered by private health insurance. Post-operative LED Photonlite Therapy, course of eight treatments – inclusive (through Assure Medispa) – \$640.