



CHARLOTTE
PLASTIC SURGERY™

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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The Ins and Outs of Liposuction

According to recent statistics, liposuction is the number one surgical cosmetic procedure performed annually – with over 69,000 procedures performed each year in the region surrounding North Carolina.

The procedure, which helps to remove exercise-resistant fat deposits, has seen a steady increase in demand over the past 10 years. However, as the demand for liposuction continues to increase, patients are encouraged to research their physician's qualifications and the variety of procedural options available to them to ensure a safe and positive outcome.

As research evolves, physicians are finding new liposuction techniques that help to improve efficacy while reducing pain, swelling, bruising and recovery time. Currently there are three forms of liposuction that leading board-certified plastic surgeons consider the most safe and effective options.

“Super-wet” liposuction involves an infusion of saline and anesthetic solution prior to the removal of excess fat through surgical suctioning. If patients have more fibrous tissue, a plastic surgeon may consider utilizing the power-assisted approach to liposuction that loosens fat through vibration, causing fewer traumas to the surrounding tissue. For larger volumes of fat, ultrasound-assisted liposuction may be used to “liquefy” the fat before it is suctioned – resulting in less complications and a smoother appearance of the skin.

According to Stephan Finical, M.D., of Charlotte Plastic Surgery, “With an increasing number of liposuction techniques available, plastic surgeons have the opportunity to structure the procedure to a patient's individual goals and body type. However, with those choices there are many things a patient needs to consider to ensure their safety and an overall positive outcome.”

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Dr. Finical recommends patients consider the following before undergoing liposuction:

- **Physician experience and qualifications:** Choosing an experienced plastic surgeon at a reputable location is very important and can directly impact the safety and outcome of the procedure. Patients should ask the number of times a physician has performed a particular type of liposuction. It also is important to confirm the physician is board certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and that he or she has completed at least five years of surgical training with a minimum of two years in plastic surgery.
- **Understand your options:** There are many forms of liposuction and new techniques are currently being evaluated by medical experts. Sometimes the newest techniques may not be the best or live up to what they promise even though they have been approved by the FDA. It's important that you speak with your plastic surgeon to determine which form of liposuction will best meet your individual desired outcome and whether new techniques are better than others.
- **Don't assume that you're a candidate:** A good candidate for liposuction should have realistic expectations about the results of this procedure. Patients also should be average or only slightly above-average weight, and be in good overall health, with firm and elastic skin. Patients with poor skin quality or excessive amounts of cellulite are not good candidates for liposuction because they may develop skin irregularities due to under- or over-correction of localized fat deposits.
- **Follow post-operative directions carefully:** Doctors make suggestions after surgery to further avoid complications. Moderate physical activity, such as walking the day after surgery, may reduce the risk of clotting. Also, in some cases, compression garments should be worn around the treated area to reduce swelling, sometimes for up to two to four weeks.

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