

Information leaflet for people who are considering undergoing an arm lift, thigh lift, flank lift or back lift procedure.

Bey By Bergman Clinics – April 2022

In this leaflet, you will read information about the removal of excess skin and subcutaneous tissue during an arm, leg, flank or back lift procedure: why and when to undergo the procedure, the consultation, the preparation, the surgery, the period after the procedure, the result, and lastly, the complications and risks that may arise. Your personal situation and options for treatment can only be discussed during a personal conversation. This leaflet serves as preparation and/or addition to your conversation with the plastic surgeon.

Why and when

Local fat accumulation can occur on all parts of the body. For example on the sides of the body (flanks), arms and legs. This often results in a swelling of excess tissue with overlying skin in these areas. We call this a 'skin roll'. These skin rolls may cause problems. For one thing, it may be difficult for a person to find clothing that fits properly. For another, people may be unhappy with their appearance. One solution is to have the excess fat suctioned out. You will find more information about this in the leaflet on Liposuction.

In some cases, liposuction will be less suitable, because the skin and the underlying tissue have insufficient elasticity. In such cases, having the local skin with underlying fat accumulation surgically removed may be the best option. For instance, this is the case with sagging skin on the inside of the arm (an arm lift procedure, also known as 'brachioplasty') or sagging skin on the inside of the thigh (a thigh lift procedure).

Consultation

During a non-binding consultation with the plastic surgeon, you will have the opportunity to discuss your wishes, complaints and questions in detail. The plastic surgeon will examine the skin and subcutaneous fat accumulation. The surgeon will also be clear when he/she is not convinced that your problem can be adequately resolved. Next, your questions will be answered and you will receive the most detailed possible information about the preparation, the procedure, the expected result and the possible complications. After all, you may be disappointed with the result if you go into the procedure with the wrong idea. Where possible, the surgeon will suggest a different solution (for example liposuction or liposculpting). If you wish, you can be referred to a colleague for a second opinion.

Cosmetic surgery is not covered by health insurance. Reimbursement of medically necessary surgery depends on the criteria set by the healthcare insurance company for this procedure. You can consult your healthcare insurance company and/or policy terms and conditions to check these criteria. The specialist cannot deviate from these criteria. The current rules for reimbursement may change in the future.

Your own responsibilities prior to your surgery:

You should observe a number of preparations in the period prior to your surgery, such as:

- **Stopping blood thinners (anticoagulants):**

You may need to stop taking your blood-thinning medication prior to the surgery. The plastic surgeon will inform you about this. In addition, you will attend a pre-operative screening with the anaesthesiology assistant several weeks prior to your surgery, in which your health and the medication policy will be discussed. This included a discussion of which blood-thinning medication you need to stop using (temporarily). If your prescribing physician does not approve the temporary discontinuation of blood-thinning medication, then the scheduled surgery cannot take place at Bey by Bergman Clinics.

- **Submit your general medication overview (GMO):**

If you are using medication, this overview can be obtained from your pharmacy, or you can give us permission to share your medication details via the National Exchange Point.

- **Submit the signed Informed Consent Form:**

You will receive this form once your surgery has been scheduled.

- Pay the invoice according to the terms of payment*.

ALCOHOL POLICY:

- No alcohol for 48 hours before surgery and 2 weeks after surgery.

SMOKING POLICY:

- Smoking has a negative effect on wound healing.
- No smoking for 4 weeks before surgery and 4 weeks after surgery.

NAIL VARNISH POLICY:

- There is no need to remove nail varnish, gel nails or acrylic nails prior to the surgery.

DRUGS POLICY:

- Use of drugs like XTC, methamphetamine, heroin or cocaine must be stopped at least 1 week before surgery. This can otherwise cause severe heart rhythm disorders during the operation or reduce the effect of anaesthetics.
- This does not apply to prescription amphetamine use for AD(H)D.
- The same rules as for smoking apply to cannabis.

FASTING POLICY:

Please refer to the anaesthesiology leaflet for the fasting policy.

Good idea to purchase before the surgery:

- Paracetamol 500 mg, 2 tablets 4x daily
- Naproxen (Aleve) 250 mg 2x daily, if necessary (reduce this pain medication before paracetamol)
- Pantoprazole (gastric protector) 20 mg 1x daily (with use of Naproxen)
- Cotton sanitary pads
- Non-sterile gauze

The surgery

- The removal of the excess skin and/or subcutaneous tissue and/or fatty tissue usually takes place under general anaesthesia.
- The plastic surgeon often marks the area of skin that needs to be removed just before surgery. Next, the surgeon sometimes reduces the area in question first using liposuction, after which the remaining excess skin is separated and removed with a large incision. This includes any remaining subcutaneous fatty tissue that was not removed with the liposuction.

- Finally, the wound is closed internally with soluble sutures.
- If the plastic surgeon removes skin and tissue from your arm or leg, he will - if possible - make the incision on the inside of your arm or leg. On the back, he will try to ensure that the scar falls under the bra strap.
- The scar is always equal in size to the length of the area that requires treatment, for example the entire upper arm, the entire thigh or the back.
- A tube (drain) is sometimes left in the wound during the surgery and this drain is attached to a vacuum bottle to suction off any excess blood or wound exudate.

If you are allowed home, somebody must accompany you home. You may not drive a vehicle yourself. We also recommend that you do not spend the first 24 hours alone at home.

After the procedure

You will experience some pain after any procedure. This is normal. The drains will be removed the day after the surgery. Sometimes the drains will be left in the wound for a longer period, until the wound is no longer bleeding a lot and no longer leaks wound exudate. The pain will decrease over the course of a few days. The skin can feel taut. This sensation will gradually disappear. Following the procedure, the surgical area can become swollen and you may develop painful bruising. Fluid accumulation can occur around the ankles and occasionally the forearms. This usually disappears spontaneously after about two to six weeks. The plastic surgeon usually closes the wound with soluble sutures. This means that these sutures do not need to be removed.

Due to high tension in the tissue, the wound can open spontaneously in places about one or two weeks after the surgery. There is no need to worry about this. You should rinse the open wound with the shower head every day. You should cover the wound with a sanitary pad after rinsing. The sanitary pad ensures that the wound is not pulled open again every time the dressing is removed. The open wounds will heal spontaneously over the course of four to eight weeks. You can take the prescribed pain medication if you experience any pain. Please contact the number +31 (0)88 9000535 if you have any questions about this.

Recovery period

Starting from the day after the surgery, you may:

- Sleep on your back or side.
- Shower on a daily basis at home.
- Use sanitary pads or non-sterile gauze for any oozing of the wound.
- Mobilise according to the pain, listen to your body.
- Increase your activities further each day.
- you can start driving and cycling 2 weeks after surgery (this depends on your healthcare insurance company).
- Sauna, bath, swimming pool and exercise after 6 weeks.

Depending on the limb that you have had surgery on, you will wear pants or arm sleeves after surgery.

You should wear these:

- Day and night during the first 2 weeks
- During the day in weeks 3 and 4
- If necessary in weeks 5 and 6

You will need to use SPF 30 sun cream to protect the scars against the sun during the first year. Ask your specialist about any restrictions in your travel plans after your procedure.

You will visit the nurses and the specialist for check-ups after the surgery. We want to remind you that it is important for you to attend these follow-up appointments. This allows the nurse and the medical specialist to monitor the progress of your recovery. They can also offer advice if you have any questions regarding the information provided above.

The result

The plastic surgeon can determine the final result of the procedure after approximately three to six months. Cutting away skin and subcutaneous fatty tissue – as performed during an arm/leg/back lift – can improve the body contour, but perfection cannot always be achieved. Occasionally it is not possible to remove all the excess fatty tissue, or the result is asymmetrical.

After surgery, you will have scars that will always remain visible. The location and the size of the scars depend on the amount of excess skin that has been removed. It is impossible to predict how good or bad the scars will look. The scars measure a few millimetres in width and will initially be fiery and red. The scars will turn a little whiter in colour after one to two years. The final state of the scars depends – among other factors – on your predisposition to forming scar tissue and on time. Most people are satisfied with the result of the procedure. In some cases, the result is not permanent due to fluctuations in weight, or because your tissue and/or skin stretches again. Perhaps you are not satisfied with the result, for example because you had different expectations. Please be sure to mention this.

Complications and risks

The plastic surgeon always invests a great deal of time, care and personal attention in your treatment. However, complications do unfortunately occur: no procedure is entirely free of the risk of complications. The normal risks of surgery – such as thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, post-op bleeding and wound infection – also apply to this surgery. Specific complications can also occur:

- Post-op bleeding that is heavier than normal can sometimes occur after the surgery. The surgical field will feel extra strained and a lot of blood will seep out via the drains. A post-op bleed usually occurs within the first hours after the surgery. If a post-op bleed occurs, then you will require further surgery to remove the excess blood and to stop the bleeding. A post-op bleed can be resolved with further surgery.
- Sometimes an infection develops: the wound area becomes red and warm to the touch and you will develop a fever. If this does happen, it usually only occurs one or two weeks after the surgery. You can start to feel ill and the wound can open up, causing it to ooze pus and old blood. You must contact the plastic surgeon if you start to feel ill, if the wound becomes red and/or if you develop a fever.
- Residual swelling and hardening can sometimes be present and may only resolve after weeks or even months.
- There is a small risk of death (necrosis) of the wound edges along the scars. Wound exudate can also leak from the wound due to necrosis of the subcutaneous fatty tissue. Often the plastic surgeon will wait until the necrotic tissue has dried and fallen off, but sometimes it needs to be removed surgically. If this occurs, the wound is often left open and needs to be rinsed twice a day until the wound has healed spontaneously.
- The skin in the surgical area and along the scar often has reduced sensation or no sensation at all. This generally does not cause problems. The sensation often recovers partially over the course of the years.

Always contact us after surgery in the following cases:

- Significantly increased swelling of the wound or the surgical area
- Pain, if the pain medication does not help or the pain even increases
- Redness and some swelling of the wound
- Feeling ill and/or a fever, above 38°C (measured via the anus)
- Persistent nausea
- Acute tightness across the chest
- Acute pain in the leg, possibly with swelling
- Being unable to urinate, whilst drinking normal quantities
- Concerns or doubts

We can be contacted for emergencies 24 hours per day, via +31 (0)88 9000 567.
For non-urgent matters, please call +31 (0)88 9000 535 during office hours.

More information

If you have any further questions after reading this leaflet, you can ask your plastic surgeon to answer these questions at any time. You can schedule an appointment for a consultation. You can contact the clinic on telephone number +31 (0)88 9000 535 about this.

Complaints and privacy regulations

Bey by Bergman Clinics has complaints and privacy regulations in place. A copy of these regulations can be obtained from our locations and on our website www.beyclinics.nl.

Cooling-off period

Bey by Bergman Clinics acts according to the guidelines of the NVPC and thus implements a 'cooling-off' period. This is the time between the first consultation in which the treatment is proposed and the decision to continue with the treatment. We implement a cooling-off period of one week for a cosmetic surgical procedure.

Terms and conditions of payment*

The first instalment of 25% of the treatment costs must be paid within 5 days after receipt of the invoice. The remainder of the treatment costs should be received by us no later than 4 weeks prior to the surgery date. Cash payments are only possible following agreement with your consultant. If your surgery has been approved by your healthcare insurance company, then you are responsible for reading the terms and conditions of your insurance policy to check that they will reimburse 100% of the costs of your surgery.

Cancellation policy

You must cancel your surgery in writing. Cancellation within 3 weeks prior to your surgery will result in costs already incurred to the sum of 25% of the costs of surgery being billed to you. Cancellation within 48 hours prior to the agreed date of surgery is only permitted in the case of absolute and demonstrable force majeure. In all other cases of non-insured care, you will be billed for 100% of the agreed treatment costs. In the case of a treatment that is reimbursed by your healthcare insurance company, your treatment cannot be rescheduled at Bey by Bergman Clinics. The aforementioned cancellation policy also applies if the surgery cannot be performed due to failure on your part to fulfil your responsibilities as listed in this leaflet.

Finally

This leaflet serves as preparation and as a supplement to the conversation with the plastic surgeon and as a 'reference' for the period after the surgery. However, such a description can never apply completely to each individual situation. Plastic and aesthetic surgery is not an exact science; this written information should in no way be construed as a guarantee for the course of events and the result of your procedure.