

# Body Lifts

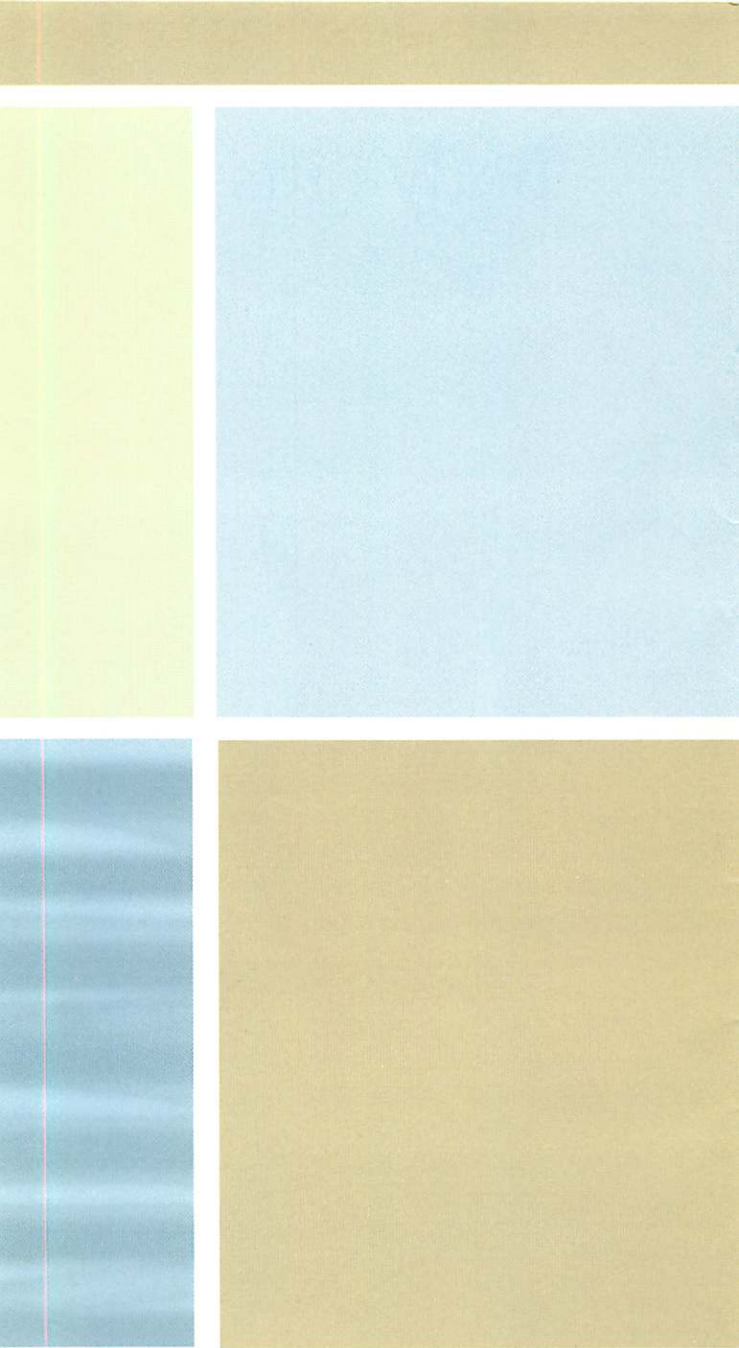


Anil P. Punjabi, MD, DDS  
365 Terracina Blvd.  
Redlands, CA 92373  
(909) 798-9950  
[www.apunjabi.com](http://www.apunjabi.com)



***The Symbol of Excellence in Plastic Surgery®***

A public education service of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons®  
and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery.



This brochure is published by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons® and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, including text, graphics, illustrations, and images, and is strictly intended for educational purposes. It is not intended to make any representations or warranties about the outcome of any procedure. It is not a substitute for a thorough, in-person consultation with a board-certified plastic surgeon.



**A WELL-TONED BODY  
WITH SMOOTH CONTOURS  
OFTEN IS A SIGN OF**

**FITNESS** achieved by healthy diet and exercise. But exercise cannot always achieve results for individuals who have loose, sagging skin and uneven contours. Aging, sun damage, pregnancy and significant fluctuations in weight as well as genetic

factors may contribute to poor tissue elasticity and can result in sagging of the abdomen, buttocks, thighs and loose upper arms.

If you desire a firmer, more youthful-looking body contour, then a surgical body lift may help achieve your goals. In general, a body lift reduces excess fat and skin resulting in smoother skin and contours. These physical changes to the body can improve your body image and enhance self-confidence.

This brochure presents an overview of body lift procedures. The best way to learn how body contouring through body lifts can help fulfill your personal goals is a consultation with a plastic surgeon certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery\* or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada\*.

## What are body lifts?

A body lift is surgery performed to correct excess loose and sagging skin and irregular contours of the:

- Abdominal area, locally or extending around the sides and into the lower back area
- Buttocks, that may be low, flat or shaped unevenly
- Groin that may sag into the inner thigh
- Thigh, including the inner, outer, or posterior thigh, or circumferentially
- Upper arms, including the armpit region

Surgical body lifting improves the shape and tone of the underlying tissue that supports fat and skin. Excess sagging fat and skin is removed to treat conditions caused in part by poor tissue elasticity. In addition, a body lift can improve a dimpled, irregular skin surface, commonly known as cellulite.

Body lifts are not intended strictly for the removal of excess fat. Liposuction alone can remove excess fat deposits where skin has good elasticity and is able to naturally conform to new body contours. In cases where skin elasticity is poor, a combination of liposuction and body lift techniques may be recommended.

Body lifting procedures may be appropriate for individuals who are of stable weight that is reasonably proportionate to their height and body frame. In addition, it is recommended that women considering future pregnancies postpone an abdominal body lift since pregnancy may diminish results. Body lift procedures may be performed on adults of any age who have realistic goals in mind for improvement of their body contour. Good candidates are:

- Individuals with significant soft tissue looseness in one or multiple body areas
- Healthy individuals who do not have medical conditions that can impair healing or increase risk of surgery
- Non-smokers
- Individuals with a positive outlook and specific goals in mind for body contouring



## Where do I begin?

A consultation with your plastic surgeon is the first step to learn how body lifting procedures can improve your body contours. A consultation is designed to fully educate you about your body lift in a non-pressured environment, and will include:

- A discussion of your goals and an evaluation of your individual case
- The options available in body lift surgery
- The likely outcomes of body lifting procedures and any risks or potential complications
- The course of treatment recommended by your plastic surgeon

Your plastic surgeon will also answer your questions.

## Evaluation

Overall health and personal outlook can greatly impact the outcome of body contouring surgery, including body lifts. These will be carefully evaluated in your consultation with your plastic surgeon. The success of your procedure, safety and overall satisfaction require that you:

- Honestly share your expectations
- Fully disclose health history, current medications, the use of vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco and drugs
- Commit to precisely following all of your plastic surgeon's instructions

## Safety

By making the decision to consult with a plastic surgeon and following all the instructions given, you are taking an important step in helping to assure your safety.

Your plastic surgeon is certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®. This certification designates surgeons who are specifically trained in plastic surgery of the face and entire body.

## My body lift

Your body lift will be individualized to your specific conditions and the regions to be treated. Conditions that may be improved by a body lift include:

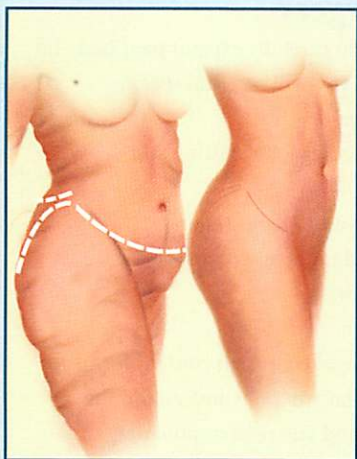
- Dimpled or uneven soft tissue (cellulite)
- Lax, loose skin
- Excess fat and tissue
- Sagging body contours

Many conditions can contribute to tissue that is weak and lacking in tone or firmness, and to uneven or sagging body contours. These most commonly include:

- Weight changes, especially substantial weight loss, such as occurs following gastric bypass surgery
- Stress on the skin and underlying tissue that may result from pregnancy
- The natural aging process causing skin and tissue to lose elasticity and tone over time
- Sun damage and other environmental factors that contribute to premature aging of the skin
- Heredity or the genetic make-up that determines one's body type and skin qualities including cellulite
- Childhood and teenage obesity resulting in premature loss of youthful skin tone

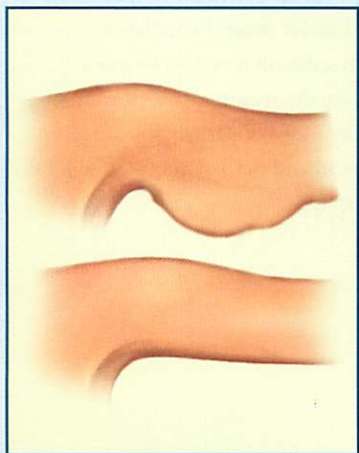
There is no other method of body contouring that can restore body shape, skin appearance, and skin tone as effectively as a body lift. Body lifts are surgical procedures and they require incisions; in some cases, incisions may be extensive. Incision length and pattern depend on the amount and location of excess skin to be removed, as well as personal preference and surgical judgment. Advanced techniques usually allow incisions to be placed in strategic locations where they can be hidden by most types of clothing and swimsuits.

Other body contouring procedures may be performed separately or in the same surgical session as a body lift, including liposuction and tummy tuck, breast lift, or male or female breast reduction. However, not all patients are good candidates for combined procedures. Your case will be evaluated on an individual basis.



*Body lifts can reduce excess sagging tissue and recontour one or multiple areas of the body. Incision patterns vary based on the area or areas to be treated, degree of correction and patient and surgeon preference. One common technique of lower body lift uses incisions "outlined" similar to a bikini pattern to tighten the abdomen, groin, waist, thigh and buttock.*

*A complete lower body lift treats the buttocks, abdomen, waist, hips and thighs in one procedure. A circumferential incision around the body removes an apron of excess skin and fat and repositions and tightens tissues. A combination of liposuction and surgical body lifts may be necessary to achieve an improved contour. Deep support sutures within underlying tissues help to form the newly shaped contours. Sutures, skin adhesives, tapes or clips close the skin incisions.*



*Brachioplasty improves the contours of the upper arm area with incisions typically placed in the inner arm region. The smoother, tighter contours that result from any body lift procedure are apparent almost immediately, although initially obscured by some swelling and bruising. Skin quality is dramatically improved both in appearance and feel. Although permanent, the resulting incision lines are generally placed within the natural body contours.*

## Preparing for surgery

Your plastic surgeon will carefully explain your body lift procedure. Prior to surgery, you will be given specific instructions that may include:

- Pre-surgical considerations, diagnostic testing and medications
- Day of surgery instructions and medications
- Specific information related to the use of anesthesia
- Postoperative care and follow-up

In addition, you will be asked to sign consent forms to assure your plastic surgeon that you fully understand the procedure you will undergo and any risks or potential complications.

Possible risks of body lift procedures include bleeding, infection, fluid accumulations, delayed or poor wound healing, skin loss, blood clots, excessive or widened scars, numbness and other changes in skin sensation and irregular or asymmetric contours or scars. Any surgery carries risks associated with anesthesia. These risks and others will be fully discussed prior to your consent.

It is important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon. It is natural to feel some anxiety, whether excitement for the anticipated outcomes or preoperative stress. Discuss these feelings with your plastic surgeon.

## What to expect

A body lift may be performed in your plastic surgeon's accredited office-based surgical facility, an ambulatory surgical facility or a hospital, possibly with an overnight hospital stay. It is most commonly performed under general anesthesia, although local anesthesia with sedation may also be used. These decisions will be based on the requirements of your specific procedure and considerations of patient and surgeon preference. Your plastic surgeon and the assisting staff will fully attend to your comfort and safety.



## Following surgery

Once your procedure is completed, dressings or bandages may be applied to your incisions, and you may be wrapped in an elastic bandage to minimize swelling and to support your new contours as you heal. One or more small, thin tubes may be temporarily placed under the skin to drain excess fluid or blood that may collect. Before you are released following surgery, you and an accompanying family member, friend or caregiver will be given specific instructions that may include:

- How to care for the surgical site and drains
- Medications to apply or take orally to aid healing and reduce the potential for infection
- Specific concerns to look for at the surgical site or in overall health
- When to follow-up with your plastic surgeon

## Progress and healing

Initial healing will include swelling at the incision sites. Discomfort is common and can be controlled with medication. You will be instructed to return to light walking as soon as possible to minimize the potential for blood clots and other complications.

You must avoid bending, straining or lifting for several days. Where tightening of the abdomen or thighs is involved, your plastic surgeon may also instruct you to avoid standing fully upright and stressing any internal sutures as they heal, and to sleep with pillows elevating your knees. Follow all instructions carefully - this is essential to the success of your outcome. A return to light, normal activity is possible as soon as you feel ready, usually within two to three weeks following surgery.

Initial wound healing may take 7 to 14 days, after which time sutures will be removed if necessary. You will be ready to return to work and normal activity in a few weeks, so long as you do not engage in any heavy lifting or vigorous exercise.

Healing will continue for several weeks as swelling dissipates and incision lines continue to improve. You must practice diligent sun protection until the healing process is fully complete. Continue to follow your plastic surgeon's instructions and attend follow-up visits as scheduled.

## Results and outlook

The results of a body lift are visible almost immediately, however it may take several months for your final results to fully develop. Numbness and a firm feeling over the skin's surface will resolve over time. It may take a year or more for incision lines to refine and fade to some degree. Although permanent, these lines can usually be hidden by most clothing and swimsuits.

Your new uplifted body contours should be long lasting, provided that you maintain your weight and general fitness. As your body ages, it is natural to lose some firmness. However, most of your improvement should be relatively permanent.

## Your surgeon, your choice

Choosing to have cosmetic or reconstructive plastic surgery is an important decision; so is selecting a plastic surgeon. Consider these important guidelines:

**BOARD CERTIFICATION** – Not all physicians who perform plastic surgery or who use the title plastic surgeon are board certified in plastic surgery.

The American Board of Plastic Surgery\* (ABPS) and The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada\* certify physicians in plastic surgery of the face and entire body. To be certified by either board, a plastic surgeon must:

- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete a minimum of five years of surgical training following medical school, including an accredited plastic surgery residency program
- Pass comprehensive written and oral exams

**PRIVILEGES** – Your surgeon should have operating privileges at an accredited, local hospital for the same procedure you plan to have performed - even if that surgeon suggests your procedure be performed in an accredited office-based surgical facility or at an ambulatory surgery center.

**This educational brochure is designed to supplement a personal consultation with a plastic surgeon certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery\* or by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada\*. Plastic surgeons with this certification have completed extensive surgical training and rigorous examinations in plastic surgery; this uniquely qualifies them to perform cosmetic and reconstructive procedures of the face and entire body.**

The American Society of Plastic Surgeons® (ASPS®) and the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) are dedicated to advancing quality care in plastic surgery by encouraging high standards in training, ethics, physician practice, research, and continuing medical education. ASPS and ASAPS members are certified by The American Board of Plastic Surgery® (ABPS) in the United States and its territories or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada®.



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
PLASTIC SURGEONS

444 East Algonquin Road  
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005-4664  
(847) 228-9900  
[www.plasticsurgery.org](http://www.plasticsurgery.org)



THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR  
AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY, INC.

Communications Office  
36 West 44th Street  
Suite 630  
New York, New York 10036  
(212) 921-0500  
[www.surgery.org](http://www.surgery.org)