

Policy for the use of Non-Cosmetic Body Contouring Surgery

Category: Restricted

Non-cosmetic body contouring surgery

Non-cosmetic body contouring surgery is an operation to remove loose and saggy skin folds after weight loss from certain areas of the body which are causing medical problems. This type of operation helps patients to prevent further or future illnesses.

There are a number of surgical interventions which can be described as body contouring procedures:

Full abdominoplasty

Also known as a 'tummy tuck', a full abdominoplasty involves making openings from hip to hip and around the belly button to remove extra skin and fat. Some tissues and muscles are also tightened before the skin is repositioned and sewn up. This procedure will leave a circular scar around the belly button and a long scar along the bikini line.

Mini abdominoplasty

A mini tummy tuck involves making a horizontal cut along the bikini line to remove a block of skin and fat from the lower tummy. Sometimes the muscles will also be tightened. This procedure will leave a smaller scar along the bikini line.

Extended abdominoplasty

Extended abdominoplasty is the same as a full tummy tuck but also involves the removal of extra skin and fat from the loins and back at the same time.

Endoscopic abdominoplasty

Endoscopic abdominoplasty is a procedure carried out only if the muscles of the abdominal wall need to be tightened. A small cut near the public bone and in or around the belly button is made to insert special surgical tools to tighten the muscles. Skin is not removed during this procedure; however liposuction can also be carried out at the same time.

Apronectomy (Panniculectomy)

An Apronectomy removes the large excess of skin and fat hanging down over the pubic area which looks like an 'apron of skin'. This extra skin can interfere with normal activities such as walking and leads to serious medical problems such as frequent skin inflammation under the flap and infection.

Brachioplasty

Brachioplasty, also known as an arm lift, removes and tightens loose skin and excess fat in the upper arm. A long cut is made between the elbow and armpit to remove sections of the skin and fat. The remaining skin and tissue are lifted and sewn up.

Thighplasty

Thighplasty, also known as a bum and/or thigh lift, involves removing the extra loose and saggy skin around the bottom and thighs. Liposuction may also be performed during this procedure to tighten the bottom and thighs.

Liposuction

Liposuction is an operation using suction technique to remove fat from certain areas of the body which haven't responded to exercise and diet.

Evidence Review

The clinical evidence reviewed showed the benefit to patients in certain clinical circumstances where excess skin is causing problems with daily life activities or on-going skin infections which have not improved after six months of treatment.

Eligibility Criteria

Non-cosmetic body contouring is a restricted procedure. The patient's local NHS commissioning organisation (CCG), who is responsible for purchasing healthcare services on behalf of the population, will only pay for the treatment if the patient:

- Is 18 years old or over at the time of application and has lost at least 50% of their original excess weight and maintained their weight for at least two years
AND
- has skin folds which are affecting the ability to carry out activities for everyday life such as sleeping, eating, walking
OR
- has recurrent skin infections in the skin folds which have not improved after 6 months of treatment.

This means the patient's NHS commissioning organisation (CCG), who is responsible for buying healthcare services on behalf of patients, will **only** fund the treatment if an Individual Funding Request (IFR) application has shown exceptional clinical need and the CCG supports this.