

Do I Need A Tummy Tuck Or Liposuction?

Bouncing baby? Yes please! Bouncing belly? Not so much...



Kyle Nieber, Pexels

Helping your body bounce back after having a baby can be a lot more bounce than full-on recovery with a mommy pooch that won't go away.

Surgery is a viable option to finally put localized fat to rest and strengthen abdominal muscles in unresponsive areas.

But, aside from dealing with a stubborn mommy belly is the fear of making the right choice.

The good news?

You don't have to become the expert.

When you book a consultation, your surgeon will determine if you are a suitable candidate for either surgery, recommending the best procedure (or combination of procedures) to reach your goals realistically.

But that doesn't mean you can't make educated decisions throughout the whole process.

Eligibility is based on a few key factors:

- Age (18 - 45 years old)
- Extent of symptoms (muscle separation/weakness, fat storage, and loose skin)
- And your general health.

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You'll also need to be a non-smoker and maintain a stable weight to be eligible, because of an increased risk of blood clotting under anesthesia.

First, What Is A Tummy Tuck?

A [tummy tuck](#), or abdominoplasty, is a cosmetic procedure that removes excess fat and skin and tightens abdominal muscles.

Although your muscles often bounce back on their own in the following post partum months, there are some cases where muscles [during pregnancy](#) become compromised and remain unresponsive leading to sagging skin, bloating, localized fat, and associated back pain that endures past 12 months.

This is called [Diastasis Recti](#).

Surgery can repair the abdominal wall to tighten muscles and significantly reduce the muscle gap, especially when separation exceeds three centimeters.

Your surgeon will modify your procedure depending on the extent of your [abdominal separation](#), loose skin, and orientation of the belly button, typically giving you a diagnosis via ultrasound and finger test.

This procedure can be modified (partial endoscopic or "mini" tummy tuck) or even paired with other procedures at once like liposuction to remove additional fat cells.

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So, What Is Liposuction?

[Liposuction](#) is a cosmetic procedure that improves the overall contour of the body by directly targeting and removing fat deposits resistant to diet and exercise.

It's mainly for those close to their goal weight looking to improve body shape by removing the number of fat cells under the skin in any given area.

However, it is not a weight loss strategy and doesn't help sagging skin, stretch marks, cellulite or Diastasis Recti.

There is a limit to how much fat can be removed and the procedure is typically not recommended to patients with poor elasticity of the skin, because of the potential for dimpling.

Lifestyle choices after undergoing liposuction will affect the number and size of fat cells after surgery.

Recovery and Pain Level

As a mother, there's a 50/50 chance you've experienced a c-section when you gave birth to your children and a 100% you know someone who has.

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So, how does a tummy tuck compare to a c-section in terms of pain level and recovery?



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From a mother who's experienced both, [brittany hayes of addison's wonderland](#) shares her personal story, comparing the two; "Let's just say that a c-section is a runny nose and a tummy tuck is pneumonia."

Pain level can be managed by 'round the clock medication, but mobility is significantly limited in the first few weeks.

While you can perform many daily functions like cooking and looking after your children while recovering from a c-section, recovering from a tummy tuck requires full assistance

including going to the bathroom and even getting out of bed.

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If you undergo a full abdominoplasty, often requiring a relocation of the belly button, the scar will be nearly double the size of a c-section scar.

Although spanning from hip to hip, you can easily conceal your scar with undergarments and visibility will likely fade significantly in the following three years after surgery.

When it comes to recovering from liposuction, scars are small and barely visible.

Pain level [after the procedure](#) is typically mild (depending on type of anesthesia), as most patients handle pain with tylenol or some narcotics in the first week after liposuction.

You can expect soreness, swelling, and tenderness to subside over the following four weeks, and start returning back to normal activities after two to three days.

While a tummy tuck is a more considerable surgery, it's necessary to help repair the damage to your abdominal muscles, so you can start returning back to your pre-baby body.

But, if you don't have considerable separation in your abdominal muscles and are just looking for that little extra push through the finish line, liposuction could be a good alternative.

Putting your body first can sometimes be the most difficult part of the process, but choosing the best option for your situation can start improving your quality of life and your confidence.