

# InHEALTH

By Dr. Scott J. Engel



## A NEW ERA IN BODY CONTOURING

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## did you know?

Specialized sutures used in tummy tucks can eliminate the need for drains in most abdominoplasty patients and avoids the dimpled scars that often results from drains.

Weight loss, pregnancy, and aging can often leave women with excess abdominal skin and areas of fat that cannot be improved with diet and exercise alone. Now more than ever, women are seeking to improve these changes. In 2016, statistics from the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery revealed liposuction was the most popular cosmetic surgical procedure and the tummy tuck, or abdominoplasty, was the third most popular procedure performed.

Techniques in plastic surgery have often been predicated by current trends and styles, especially in these times of social media. For example, the French bikini era led to a very high waisted scar. Traditionally tummy tuck involved cutting out loose skin and performing liposuction of the hips and surrounding areas. The remaining abdominal tissue was thick, scars were high, and the pubic area was left

thick and droopy. Patients would have large drains, that were often painful and left scars in the pubic area.

However, changes in grooming patterns and lower riding bikini styles have influenced a new style of body contouring. Now referred to as a Lipoabdominoplasty, newer techniques permit liposuction of the abdomen (previously considered risky) more aggressively at the same time as the tummy tuck. This results in a thinner, more defined abdomen. Scars are placed significantly lower which can be concealed in a wider range of clothing options. This also corrects drooping of the pubic region which has become more evident. The belly button is designed more precisely, and scars are concealed to avoid the telltale sign of surgery.

Another significant advancement in body contouring is the drainless tummy tuck. Use of specialized sutures or internal glue, called TissuGlu®, can eliminate the need for drains in most abdominoplasty patients. This surgical adhesive creates a strong bond between tissue layers reducing the space where fluid can accumulate during healing. Patients can walk around quicker and easier without cumbersome and uncomfortable drains. In addition, it avoids dimpled scars that often results from drains in the pubic area, which was traditionally hidden by hair.

Recent studies have determined the “ideal” female buttock size based on a proportion of measurements of the waist and hips. Although cultural and global differences may exist, a waist to hip ratio of 0.7 was found most favorable. This ideal is reflected in women’s desire to have a fuller, more shapely buttock. The Brazilian buttock lift is often performed, where fat from liposuction is transferred to the buttock. While not all women are seeking to achieve the Kardashian or J.Lo buttock, this shifting of fat has transformed body contouring procedures into body sculpting. Now lost volume due to weight loss or

aging is restored to gently lift the buttock and improve overall shape.

Finally, not all patients are eager to have surgery. Non-invasive fat reduction techniques have emerged to offer patients an improvement in areas of fat without the downtime of surgery. SculpSure® is an FDA cleared laser device to melt fat in areas such as the abdomen, flanks, back, and thighs. Although not as effective as surgery, this 25 minute procedure can be performed in the office with no downtime to eliminate unwanted fat.

When performed safely by a Board Certified Plastic Surgeon, these new advancements can result in dramatic improvements in a woman’s figure and self confidence more effectively than ever before. ❤️

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