



Abdominoplasty

PATIENT INFORMATION

An abdominoplasty, often referred to as a tummy tuck, is used to tighten your abdominal muscles and remove excess fat and skin to reveal a more aesthetically pleasing shape. It allows you to exercise more effectively and will bring your overall proportions into harmony.

The following information has been created on behalf of Dr Paterson as a general guide to assist her patients.

Although the specific nature of the surgery may vary with each individual and is dependent on the exact circumstances of each patient, the information outlined below describes what you would reasonably expect to follow. It is intended to provide a broad overview of the important considerations related to the decision to have an abdominoplasty.

Patients are encouraged to further discuss this information along with any specific questions or concerns with Dr Paterson during their consultation

An abdominoplasty is designed for women who are physically affected by the size of their lower abdomen. It is not a weight loss procedure; rather it is a shape changing procedure. Patients need to be in the right frame of mind to consider surgery and also expect a reasonable outcome.



Common reasons why people consider having *abdominoplasty*

Why do patients choose to undergo abdominoplasty?

Many women are unhappy with the size and shape of their abdomen, and the reasons they choose to undergo a tummy tuck procedure include:

- Pregnancy or having lost a significant amount of weight
- Desiring a more pleasing shape including a defined waist
- Wanting to fit into clothes of their choice
- Improving the shape of areas resistant to exercise and diet

During your consultation, Dr Paterson will discuss with you the various options available to you. Every woman is different and has unique expectations, and we feel confident that following this discussion you will arrive at a decision that is right for you.

Who should/should not consider abdominoplasty?

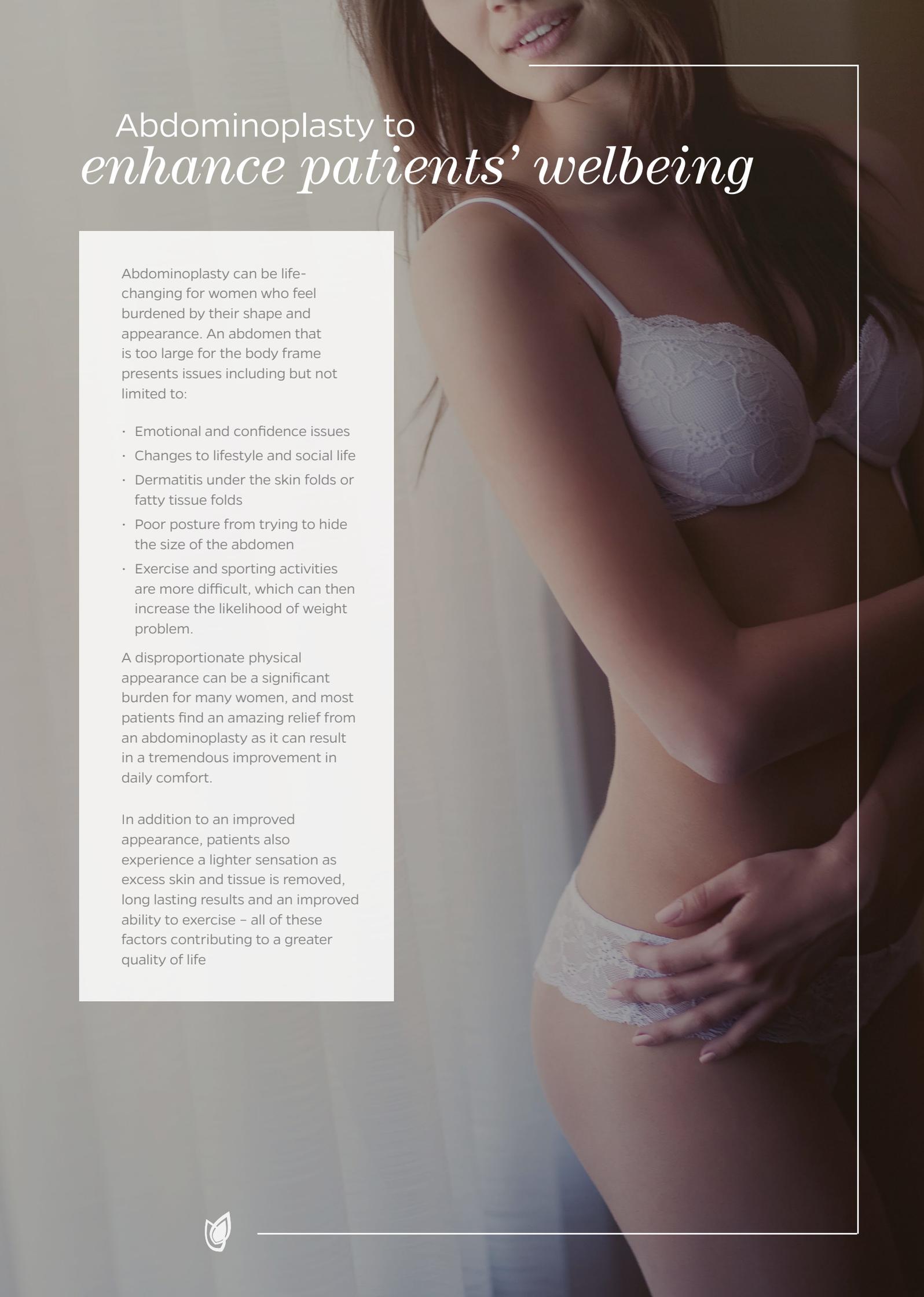
The tummy tuck is a major surgery and is not something to be taken lightly. The best candidates for a tummy tuck procedure are in good physical condition with pockets of fat or loose skin that haven't responded well to diet and exercise. More mature and slightly overweight people whose skin has lost some of its elasticity can be helped dramatically by this procedure. Abdominoplasty can also be useful for women with

stretched skin and muscles from pregnancy.

Any decision to undergo plastic surgery needs to be for the right reasons. Patients should avoid this type of surgery as a response to another individual's preference; plastic surgery is about your body and your needs. Dr Jane Paterson will always discuss this in detail with you as well as provide you with many before and after images so you can have realistic expectations.

It is important to understand all aspects of your treatment including associated risks and possible complications regarding the procedure. Smoking, a number of other medical conditions and being overweight can make surgery unsafe; however, these and other risks will be discussed with you at the time of your consultation.





Abdominoplasty to *enhance patients' wellbeing*

Abdominoplasty can be life-changing for women who feel burdened by their shape and appearance. An abdomen that is too large for the body frame presents issues including but not limited to:

- Emotional and confidence issues
- Changes to lifestyle and social life
- Dermatitis under the skin folds or fatty tissue folds
- Poor posture from trying to hide the size of the abdomen
- Exercise and sporting activities are more difficult, which can then increase the likelihood of weight problem.

A disproportionate physical appearance can be a significant burden for many women, and most patients find an amazing relief from an abdominoplasty as it can result in a tremendous improvement in daily comfort.

In addition to an improved appearance, patients also experience a lighter sensation as excess skin and tissue is removed, long lasting results and an improved ability to exercise – all of these factors contributing to a greater quality of life





Attaining your *desired appearance*

Dr Jane Paterson understands that every woman is unique, and her compassionate approach helps her understand and meet every woman's individual needs. Adding to her surgical experience and skill, Dr Paterson is inspired by nature, history and art to create sensual, feminine forms. She takes pride in her work and aims to give you a natural looking and feeling silhouette.

We aim to meet your goal appearance and to produce a more pleasing waistline by tightening the abdominal/muscle wall and decreasing excess skin and fat. Consider what you want your abdomen and shape to look and feel like after surgery and discuss this in your consultation.

Many women choose this procedure as they experience discomfort due to bulging or sagging skin, and struggle to exercise or to fit into clothes nicely. During your initial consultation, Dr Paterson will talk to you about the procedure, look at your proportions, and assess your skin type. Sometimes, liposuction can be performed as an additional procedure to provide the finishing touches and achieve the desired result.

Dr Paterson will provide you with all the information you need to be able to make an appropriate and personal decision.



Factors to consider before undergoing an abdominoplasty



If you plan to get pregnant after the procedure

It is recommended that patients have no desire for any further children. Changes in the abdomen during pregnancy or significant weight loss/gain can alter the outcomes of a previous tummy tuck surgery



Are you generally fit and healthy with a stable weight?

The tummy tuck procedure is NOT designed to achieve weight loss but rather to re-contour your figure. Significant weight loss or gain later on in life can affect the results of your abdominoplasty. Your overall health will also contribute to the success and recovery of your procedure.



Have you truly considered all of the risks?

Just like with any surgery, a tummy tuck surgery involves risk. Your surgeon will go through all of the risks with you well before your procedure; however, ensure you do thorough research and also seek a second opinion.



Do you have reasonable expectations?

You need to be in the right frame of mind to consider surgery and also expect a reasonable outcome. While your surgeon will always strive to achieve the results you want, it is unreasonable to expect the same results as another person.



How is an *abdominoplasty* performed?

Abdominoplasty is performed under a general anaesthesia and requires a hospital stay of between one and three nights. All types of surgery result in some form of scarring. The extent and placement of these scars will be determined on an individual basis, depending on the amount of enhancement required, and the quality of the tissue and skin that remains.

Before deciding to have a tummy tuck surgery, Dr Paterson will ensure that:

- You have a stable, healthy weight
- You are otherwise fit and healthy
- If you are a smoker, you are seriously considering quitting
- You have finished developing (patients need to be at least 18 years old).

Dr Paterson will explain all of the main considerations and limitations, and you will be fully informed of all of the costs associated with your surgery, including the cost of your specialist anaesthetist, the fully accredited hospital, and all of your post-operative care and appointments.

Procedure facts

Surgery duration: Two-three hours

A wedge of tissue (skin and fat) is excised from the lower abdomen from just above the pubic hairline to about the level of the umbilicus (belly button). The abdominal wall muscles are also tightened at this time.

The final incision is placed just above the pubic hairline and extends from hip to hip. The resulting scar is similar to a longer caesarian section type scar with a second small incision around the belly button.

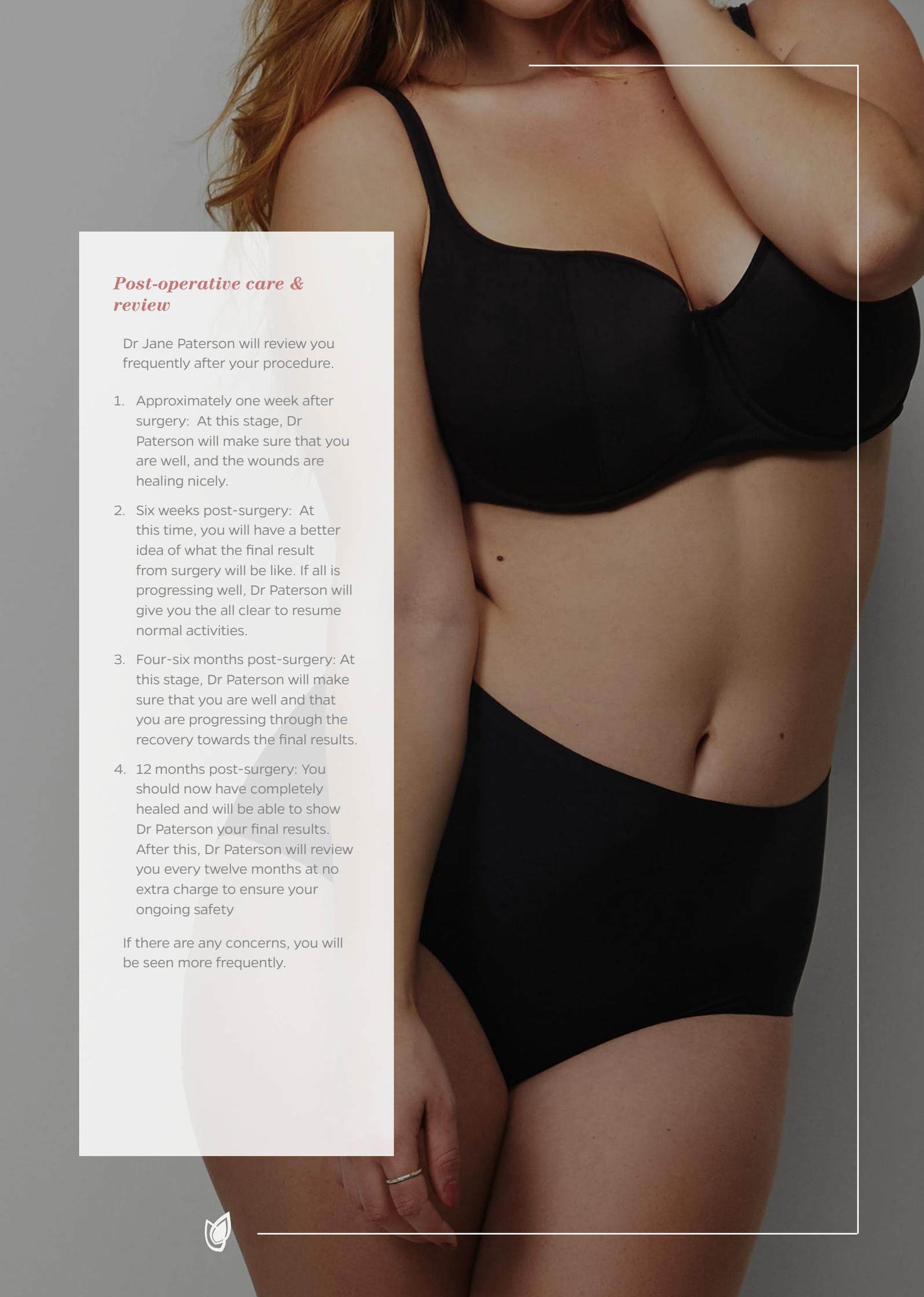
Recovery after surgery

Everyone will experience anaesthetic and recovery from an operation differently. Although uncommon, complications can also occur, and this may result in a longer recovery time.

- Post-operative pain is usually limited and is well controlled with pain relief tablets. Your wounds will be covered with waterproof dressings so that you may shower as soon as you feel comfortable.
- Patients may feel a little uncomfortable for a few days. It is expected and entirely normal to experience some discomfort, swelling and bruising to your abdomen after your surgery.

- You should avoid heavy lifting for the first six weeks; avoid the gym, aerobics, running, etc.
- You should gradually increase mobility and activity; patients typically return to most normal day to day activities at two weeks.
- Most people allow three weeks off work; however, you may require additional time if your job is more physically demanding – this can be discussed with your surgeon.
- You will be able to drive when you feel comfortable in doing so.



A woman with long, wavy brown hair is shown from the chest down to the thighs. She is wearing a black strapless bra and black high-waisted briefs. Her right hand is raised to her head, and her left hand is resting on her hip. The background is a plain, light grey color.

Post-operative care & review

Dr Jane Paterson will review you frequently after your procedure.

1. Approximately one week after surgery: At this stage, Dr Paterson will make sure that you are well, and the wounds are healing nicely.
2. Six weeks post-surgery: At this time, you will have a better idea of what the final result from surgery will be like. If all is progressing well, Dr Paterson will give you the all clear to resume normal activities.
3. Four-six months post-surgery: At this stage, Dr Paterson will make sure that you are well and that you are progressing through the recovery towards the final results.
4. 12 months post-surgery: You should now have completely healed and will be able to show Dr Paterson your final results. After this, Dr Paterson will review you every twelve months at no extra charge to ensure your ongoing safety

If there are any concerns, you will be seen more frequently.



No surgery is *risk free*

All surgery is a balance between realistic surgical goals and the knowledge of possible risks and complications.

Risks are minimised by careful patient selection and planning, high standards of surgical training, meticulous surgical technique and vigilant postoperative care. Small, less serious issues are common, and every effort is made to resolve them quickly. These very rarely have any long term effect on an excellent final result.

Risks to consider

Anaesthetic: In healthy people, general anaesthesia is very safe with modern techniques. Dr Paterson will give you the details of your anaesthetist before surgery to discuss any specific concerns.

Infection in the wound:

If this does occur, it can usually be cleared up with antibiotic tablets.

Scars: Typically the resulting scars are at their thickest and reddest at 6-10 weeks after surgery. Scars continue to mature and improve for up to 18 months after surgery. Scar management advice will be discussed in your follow-up visit with Dr Paterson to assist in achieving the goal of a thin, barely noticeable scar.

Note: The resulting scar is across the lower abdomen from hip to hip and designed to be hidden by most

underwear/bathers as well as a small scar around the umbilicus (belly button).

Asymmetry: The scars may be slightly different on your right compared to left side.

Wound separation/delayed healing: This is much more common in smokers or if there is an infection.

Wound healing issues:

Stretch marks may not all be removed, or new ones may be created. Gathers in the wound are often present at either end. These settle over several weeks to months in the majority of cases but sometimes may need a small revision often under local anaesthetic. Initially, there is almost always some contour issues or puckers. These settle down in most cases over several weeks.

Numbness: Almost always occurs in the skin of the

abdomen but usually settles down over the next few weeks to months.

Seroma: Clear like fluid that can collect following surgery. Usually, it settles down with no intervention but if persistent or large may require drainage in the rooms (sometimes on several occasions) or even a drain tube to be inserted.

Bleeding/Haematoma: This may need a return to the operating theatre to evacuate a blood clot. This can impact on wound healing or skin survival.

Disclaimer

Individual results may vary. Surgery and all health regulated services carry risks which need to be discussed with your doctor. It is always recommended to seek a second opinion.



“The tummy tuck is a procedure that really can ‘turn back the clock’ and give you a more youthful shape. It allows you to exercise more effectively and enhance your fitness. Jeans, dresses and skirts sit better, and your overall proportions are more in harmony. It really sets you up for the next phase of your life.”

- Dr Jane Paterson

If you feel that an abdominoplasty could improve your quality of life, it's essential to see a trusted and caring surgeon. The procedure and complications will be explained in detail at a consultation with Dr Jane Paterson who will fully assess all cases and help you to prepare for the surgery both mentally and physically should you decide to proceed.

It's essential that your decision to go ahead with surgery is met with realistic expectations of the outcome. The reality of any surgery at all is that you will have scarring. These typically fade with time, but you normally will be left with a fine line.

Is Dr Paterson experienced in performing tummy tuck procedures?

Dr Jane Paterson has many years of experience in performing plastic and cosmetic procedures including abdominoplasty. She is dedicated to providing successful results for her patients while ensuring their comfort at all stages of the procedure. Dr Paterson and her team pride themselves on providing a warm welcoming environment, and will take the time to listen to your individual needs and concerns.





Dr. Jane Paterson

COSMETIC PLASTIC SURGEON

Contact Us

For more information on any of these procedures please contact the Jane Paterson team on 03 9429 3343 or visit our website below:

drjanepaterson.com.au

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