

# Arm Reduction

*Weight loss or simple aging can cause the upper arm to sag, creating an unsightly “bag” of flesh and loose skin.*

## About arm reduction surgery

As we age, the skin and flesh of our upper arms begin to sag, creating a loose “bag” of skin that hangs from the lower side of the arm when the arm is extended. This condition can also occur after substantial weight loss. It can be corrected by removing skin and fatty tissue, however the surgery often leaves a noticeable scar.

As the goal for most patients is to be able to leave the arms bare, some people may not find this a satisfactory trade-off. However, for patients who have lost a significant amount of weight, arm lift surgery can be an important part of restoring a balanced body shape.

## Your consultation

During your consultation your surgeon will take a medical history and ask you about your goals for the procedure. He will discuss the surgery and make sure you understand the amount of scarring to be expected.

Because scars on the body do not fade as much as those on the face, increasing efforts have focused on limiting the scars for arm lift surgery. When the degree of loose skin and fatty tissue is limited, it is possible to perform a combination of liposuction and shorter scar technique.

At your consultation, your surgeon will discuss with you whether you would be a suitable candidate for this approach. It requires that only a moderate volume needs to be reduced and that your skin has sufficient elasticity. People who have significant sun damage, extensive stretch marks or very loose skin are not candidates for short scar surgery.

## Your operation: what to expect

Should you choose arm reduction surgery, your procedure will be performed under general anaesthetic and you can either return home the same day or stay in hospital overnight. The procedure normally takes between one and two hours. Depending on the technique used, the scars may be placed only in the armpit, in the armpit and for a short distance on the inner part of the arm, or along the inside of the from elbow to armpit.

## After your surgery

Discomfort after arm reduction surgery is usually minimal and can be relieved by either prescription painkillers or mild analgesics like Paracetamol. Aspirin must be avoided as it can promote bleeding.

As you recover there are some things you should expect:

- Some swelling and bruising is normal and should resolve in a matter of days or weeks.
- Your sutures will dissolve on their own and your bandages will be removed in one week.
- You can shower in four to seven days, but in the early stages you should try to keep the dressings dry.
- Hands and wrists can swell after surgery on the arms, so when you are resting you should try to keep your arms elevated on pillows at your sides.



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- Two to four postoperative visits are commonly required, but more may be needed if the scar management requires more intervention.
- During these post-operative visits, your surgeon will suggest measures you can take to control the build-up of scar tissue and minimise the visibility of your scars. These strategies often include using silicone gel and massage for a period of several months, or using a tape impregnated with silicone applied straight over the scar.
- Arm movement should be reduced for a month.

Complications from arm reduction surgery are rare but may include infection, bleeding and excessive scarring.

## More information

Naturally, there will be many questions you will want to ask before making any decisions about undergoing surgery. Also you will wish to meet your Surgeon - having trust and confidence in one's Surgeon is very important.

Surgery is unique to every patient and a detailed discussion and assessment between you and your Consulting Surgeon is essential in enabling you to make a decision based on correct personal information and advice.

Arranging a medical consultation does not obligate you to anything other than attending the appointment.

There is no obligation to proceed with treatment. This is entirely a matter for your decision, after the surgeon has decided on the feasibility and accepted you as suitable.

If you would like to know more information we will be happy to answer any queries either by email, letter or telephone, so please do not hesitate to get in touch.