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Look Great {The Youth Corridor}

By Gerald Imber, M.D.

Q:

“I’ve dieted, exercised, and still can’t lose the post-pregnancy pooch. What are my surgical options?”



No matter how joyous your pregnancy, it is impossible to not ask yourself the question, “Will my body ever get back to normal?” Generally, my answer is “almost.”

So many women ask what can be done about the little belly they just can’t seem to lose after childbirth. I can find no scientific explanation for that persistent bulge of abdominal fat that can’t be dieted or exercised away; it’s one of those things that “just is.” As we age, women and men alike have the tendency to accumulate fat in a horizontal figure eight pattern, but pregnancy speeds up the process.

Obviously, there are a host of other physical changes secondary to pregnancy, but the post-pregnancy pooch is perhaps the most ubiquitous of all. It is also, believe it or not, the easiest to deal with—but not entirely on your own. After you do the hard work of getting back to your normal weight and toning up your muscles, a doctor can do the rest.

The procedure I use is the simplest form of liposuction:

Under intravenous sedation and local anesthesia, two quarter-inch incisions are made within the folds of the umbilicus (belly button). These allow your doctor to pass a small, sterile cannula from the umbilicus to the fatty areas and remove the excess fat. Generally, I employ the tumescent technique, in which a sterile saline solution is infused to help mobilize the excess fat, but when the amount of fat is small, I feel it is better done with dry technique. (The choice is technical, and means little to you, or the result.)

The next logical question is, “Will my skin shrink and tighten?” Most women of childbearing age retain a high degree of skin elasticity, which is why skin stretched enough

to accommodate a basketball usually springs back into shape. Women whose skin remains loose after pregnancy, however, should not expect it to contract after liposuction. In this case, I often suggest liposuction to remove the fat, along with a mini tummy tuck to tighten the skin.

Overall, correcting the post-pregnancy pooch is a simple, easy procedure. Risks are extremely minimal, and unusual. Recovery requires wearing an elastic waistband for a few days, and in my experience, the result is almost always positive.

Often, the post-baby belly is only part of a group of changes, including varying degrees of stretching of the abdominal skin, stretch marks, and loss

of breast substance. If you recognize this picture, don’t fret—you are not alone. Treatment for this triad is so common that it has become known as “the mommy makeover”...and we can talk about that at another time.

Gerald Imber, M.D., is a renowned plastic surgeon to the stars, an author, and a teacher. He heads a private clinic in New York City and is affiliated with the Weill-Cornell Medical College. Imber is cited by Castle Connolly and USNEWS as among the top 1 percent of plastic surgeons in the country. His philosophy, “The Youth Corridor,” is defined as the period of life when you look your healthy, youthful best. His book, The Youth Corridor, can be purchased at amazon.com and is also available at Books for iPad including instructional videos.

Have a question for Dr. Imber? Email him at info@drimber.com.

\$1.2

TOTAL AMOUNT, IN BILLIONS, AMERICANS
SPENT ON LIPOSUCTION IN 2013

SOURCE:
American Society
for Aesthetic
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