

Fat Transfer

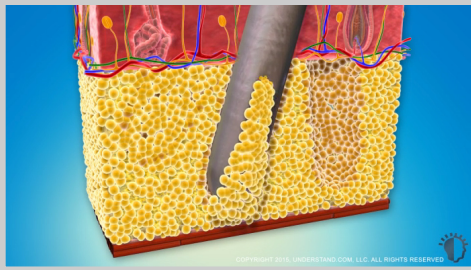
For those who would like to decrease unwanted fat in specific body areas while restoring or adding volume to other areas of the body, a fat transfer can improve body contours and revitalize overall appearance. This animation will highlight the fat transfer procedure including how fat is removed from certain areas of the body using liposuction, the process of transferring fat into a targeted location, and what to expect after surgery.





Introduction

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How a Fat Transfer Works

Over time, the contours of the body change due to the effects of aging, gravity, and weight and hormonal fluctuations. Additionally, unwanted fat may accumulate in areas such as the abdomen, back, buttocks, and thighs.

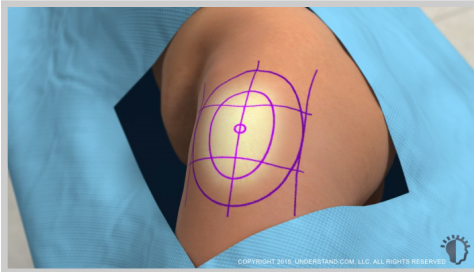
A fat transfer procedure works by removing unwanted, excess fat through liposuction and injecting it into areas of the body where rejuvenation is desired. The face, breasts, and buttocks are three common areas that can be revitalized using fat injections.

Signs of aging in the face and neck occur for many reasons, such as heredity, skin type, sun exposure, and lifestyle choices. Several areas of the face can be treated with a fat transfer including the cheeks, forehead, nose, chin, under-eye area, jawline, temples, and lips. A fat transfer, sometimes performed in combination with a face lift, can reduce the appearance of wrinkles, frown lines, or depressions while revitalizing the contours of the face.

Women who are dissatisfied with the size of their breasts or have experienced changes in breast appearance can achieve fuller, shapelier breasts with a fat transfer breast augmentation. A fat transfer breast augmentation results in only a small increase in breast size, but offers natural-looking results.

Weight loss, aging, and heredity may cause you to be unhappy with the size and shape of your buttocks. A buttock augmentation using fat transfer can help add volume and create a more youthful, shapelier appearance.

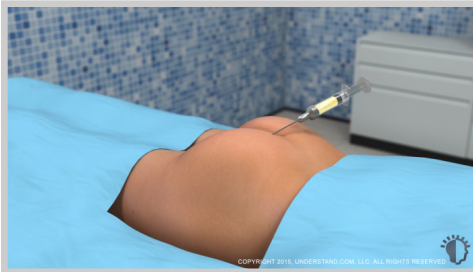
This animation will highlight a fat transfer procedure used for buttock augmentation, also known as a Brazilian Butt Lift.



Preparation

A buttock augmentation by fat transfer may last approximately one to four hours, depending on the complexity of the procedure and whether an additional procedure is performed at the same time.

Your surgeon will carefully mark the areas where fat will be removed, and the areas where fat will be injected. These markings will be used as guidelines during the procedure. Fat transfer may be performed under local anesthesia where only the surrounding area is numb. Alternatively, for procedures involving large or multiple areas of the body, you may be asleep under general anesthesia. A special medicated fluid called tumescent fluid is injected into the areas that will be treated with liposuction. This fluid expands the tissues, to make it easier to remove fat cells, numbs the treatment area, and minimizes bleeding. Once a large volume of tumescent fluid is injected into the treatment area, you will rest for several minutes while the area becomes completely numb.



Procedure

Your surgeon will begin the procedure by using liposuction to harvest your fat. Excess fat is removed from areas of the body including the jowls, back, abdomen, thighs, and buttocks. Most body fat is located on top of muscle tissue, just beneath the skin. Liposuction works by surgically removing excess fat with a suction device, resulting in improved contours in the desired area.

Depending on the location of the procedure, your surgeon will make short incisions along natural creases of your body in order to easily conceal scars. Your surgeon will insert a small tube-like device, called a cannula. Using a forward and backward motion, small tunnels are created in the fat layer, removing the fat with a gentle suction. The tunnels will collapse over the next few weeks, resulting in new contours in the specific treatment areas. For more information on the liposuction procedure, please view our liposuction animation.

Next, the undamaged fat cells that were removed are isolated, cleansed, and prepared to be injected into the buttocks. Some surgeons may prepare the fat with stem cells before injection.

Then, your surgeon will use a cannula to inject the fat cells into your buttocks. Using a forward and backward motion, fat is slowly added in multiple areas until the desired volume is achieved.

The incisions may be closed with sutures or may be left open. Surgical drains may be inserted in order to help prevent fluid buildup. Lastly, absorbent pads are applied to protect the incision sites as you heal.



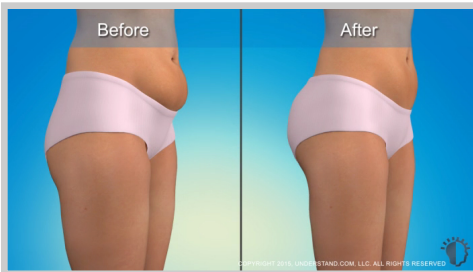
Recovery

Most fat transfer procedures are completed in outpatient surgery facilities; you should be ready to go home the same day, usually within two to four hours.

You will likely need to wear a compression garment for a few weeks to provide support, minimize swelling, and help the skin conform to the new contours of the body. You may also be prescribed medication to manage your pain for the first few days and as needed as you heal. It is a good idea to allow yourself several days to recover before resuming your daily activities.

Pain and bruising after the procedure are normal, and typically will fade within a couple weeks. Swelling also may occur and should subside within several months. If surgical drains are present, they along with any bandages will likely be removed within the first week following surgery, while any non-dissolvable stitches may stay in place for seven to ten days.

Be sure to follow your surgeon's recovery plan, including sitting and sleeping position restrictions, in order to avoid complications and allow your body time to heal.



Risks and Results

Consult your surgeon regarding risks such as cysts, infection, small mineral deposits called microcalcifications, and death of fat cells. You also may need to discuss options for future fat transfers as it may take more than one procedure to achieve your desired look.

While you will most likely notice an improvement immediately after the procedure, final results will not be apparent until one year after surgery. You should have initial satisfaction with the size and shape of the buttocks after surgery, however much of this is due to swelling and the results may diminish over time. Although fat cells are removed permanently during the procedure, it is important to realize that fat transfer does not prevent growth of remaining fatty tissue. Additionally, fat cells injected into the buttocks may disperse from the injected area. Your results may also change if you gain or lose weight.

With realistic expectations and proper maintenance, you may enjoy the results of your fat transfer procedure for several years.