PRINTZLAU

PRIVATHOSPITAL

Information on buttock augmentation with fat cells

About fat transfer

Buttock augmenting surgeries are increasingly popular within the field of cosmetic surgery. Regardless of whether the reason for seeking out buttock augmentation is innate deformity, natural age-related changes, weight loss or simply a desire for bigger buttocks, this particular procedure provides a lot of patients with a feeling of increased well-being and satisfaction. Until now, the use of silicone implants has been the preferred method for buttock augmentations. The procedure does not have a long tradition in Denmark or the rest of the Nordic coun-tries. This is partly due to less demand and partly because silicone implants cause more issues in buttock augmentation than in breast augmentation.

Now, new options are available. Fat transfer treatments make use of fat cells that have been harvested during a special and gentle liposuction by placing the fat cells in the buttocks.

Through careful and delicate cleansing of the fat cells and a special injection technique, a long-lasting result is achieved. The fat cells that survive the first 3 months, (typically about 50-80%) will behave as any other fat cell in the body. This means that if you lose weight after the surgery, you will also lose volume in your buttocks exactly like non-operated buttocks would do - and vice versa. Without any changes in weight, the durability of the surgical result will be several years or even life-long. However, fat transfer surgery has not existed long enough that this claim can be made with absolute certainty. Since a large part of the buttocks is made up of fat cells, a natural and durable result can be achieved with this surgical treatment.

Who is eligible for the surgery?

Since buttock implants in silicone are associated to risk of complications, it is often recommended against.

Fat transfer surgery makes it possible to perform buttock augmentations without using im-plants, and that is groundbreaking news. Fat transfer surgery provides the option for perma-nent buttock augmentation with your own tissue. Simultaneously, the method leaves a much smaller scar and lower risk of complications than the traditional implant-based methods.

Do you want a subtle and natural, yet noticeable result?

Patients who desire a small or moderate buttock augmentation are best suited for this surgery. There are limits to how many fat cells can be transferred during one single surgery. If you desire a larger augmentation, the surgery can be repeated several times as long as there are enough fat cells to harvest from another part of the body.

Most times, 150-300 ml of fat can be transferred to each buttock during a single surgery. That is similar in volume to most buttock implants.

150 ml might not sound like a lot, but if you imagine that fat tissue corresponding in volume to small steak (150 g) is put in the right place on the buttock to create the right projection, the result is noticeable, natural and subtle at the same time.

If you wish to have a large buttock augmentation at once, fat transfer alone might not be right for you. Fat transplant in combination with e.g. a butt lift and other body contouring can bring about remarkable changes.

Do you have weight to lose?

For this surgery, it is important you have enough fat cells to transfer from another part of the body. Typically, the fat cells are harvested from the thighs, the hips or the on the stomach. Not all fat cells survive the transplant, and some are damaged and discarded during the

cleansing process. For this reason, the rule of thumb is to harvest double the amount of fat the breast is desired to increase with. If you would like an augmentation of 150 ml on each side, 300 ml of fat should be harvested for each buttock - 600 ml in total.

Do you want a long-lasting result without having to go through surgery again?

In opposition to buttock augmentations with silicone implants that can harden or change in shape and may cause pain (capsular contraction) that demand new surgery to be corrected, fat transfer surgeries have a markedly lower risk of complications that could warrant new surgery. Simultaneously, there are no risks of the body rejecting the cells that survive the transfer because the body will recognize them as its own.

Is your weight normal?

We have chosen only to offer this surgery to patients with a BMI between 21 and 28 because it is within this interval that the treatment can be performed successfully.

If you are very lean, it can be hard or impossible to find suitable areas for harvesting fat cells. If, on the other hand, you are very overweight, we cannot offer you this surgery. The result will be remarkably poorer if you are very overweight or obese; fat cells in obese people are larger and more susceptible to damage during liposuction than fat cells form someone with a weight within the normal range. If you have previously been overweight but are not anymore, you can have fat transfer surgery with the same result as other patients whose bodyweight are within the normal ranges.

Is you weight fairly stabile?

The cells that survive the fat-transfer will behave exactly as they did before the transfer. This means that if you lose a lot of weight after a fat transfer treatment, you will also lose a lot of the volume in your buttocks that came with the fat transfer. Therefore, we do not recommend this treatment to patients who vary a lot in bodyweight. For the same reason it does not pay off to deliberately gain weight before a fat transfer in order to have enough fat to harvest.

When you lose the weight again after the fat transfer, you will be very likely to lose some of the volume in your buttocks that you gained with the fat transfer.

Do you also want a butt lift?

When augmenting buttocks that are sagging slightly, they are automatically lifted. That being said, the extent of the lift is limited. For that reason, a butt lift is sometimes combined with fat transfer surgery. The butt lift leaves a horizontal scar across the lower back area, just on the upper border of the buttocks, where the panties can hide it.

In other cases, if the buttocks are slacker and have loose skin in the fold towards the thigh, placing the scar here instead can reduce the loose skin.

Both lifting techniques can be combined with fat transfer surgery. Whether this is feasible can only be determined during a consultation with a plastic surgeon. In some cases it is recom-mended performing the butt lift and the fat transfer surgery in two separate procedures with at least 3 months in between.

Do you have patience?

It requires some patience to undergo this type of buttock augmentation. Not because there are special precautions to take before or after the surgery, but because it takes longer for the swelling to disappear when comparing to breast augmentations with implants. The fat cells that do not survive the transfer cause some swelling in the buttock area during the 3 months after the surgery. Therefore, fat transfers are best suited for those who can wait for the final result to eventually reveal itself.

How is a buttock augmentation carried out?

First consultation

If you are interested in hearing more about fat transfer to the buttocks or a butt lift surgery, you can schedule a consultation. During your first consultation, we will discuss whether the treatment can accommodate your wishes and you can get answers to any questions you may

have. Your buttocks are meticulously photographed for “before and after” photos, and the vol-ume of your hips and buttocks will be measured so that we can accurately evaluate the result after the surgery.

Danish legislation on “cosmetic treatment” requires that you wait a minimum of seven days from your first consultation before you can make an appointment for the desired sur-gery. This serves to protect you by preventing any impulsive or rash decisions to undergo cosmetic sur-gery. You have the right to bring an assessor with you to your consultation, and we advise you to do so. This provides you with an opportunity to discuss pros and cons for the surgery even after you have returned home.

The surgery

As you arrive at the hospital on the day of the surgery, you are greeted by the nurse and as-signed your room. The surgery itself is performed under full anesthesia and consists of two separate procedures:

1. First, the fat cells are harvested with gentle liposuction. During your consultation, you decide with the surgeon from where the fat cells will be harvested. During the liposuction, the cells are rinsed with saltwater in order to remove any blood, water or oil from perforated fat cells. Sometimes, the cells are also centrifuged to remove excess water.
2. Next, the cells are injected into the buttocks with a flat syringe through 3-4 small access points in each buttock. The scars will be about 2-3 mm in size and are usually very subtle or com-pletely invisible.

The first 24 hours after the surgery

You will feel slightly drowsy and tired when you wake up after the surgery. That is why we keep you under close observation for a few hours. In most cases, you will be able to return to your home on the same day without needing strong pain relieving treatment. You can lie on your back and you can sit, stand and walk already from the first day. However, there are a few restrictions during the first few weeks (mentioned below). The next morning, you can shower and do non-strenuous activities. On the area where the liposuction was performed,

you will be using a compression bandage for up to 6 weeks, depending on the extent of the liposuction.

The subsequent weeks

A physically non-demanding job can be resumed after 4-7 days. If your work is physically de-manding, 7-10 days of rest are required. For the first 2 weeks after the surgery, you should avoid physical manipulation of the buttocks, and only after 4 weeks would we recommend resuming strenuous physical activity and participation in sports and ball games that may in-volve any shoving, pushing or falling.

The recommendations are as follows:

- **First and second week:**
  You can lie flat on your back, but you should try to lay on you side and your belly when you sleep. You can stand up and you can walk. You can sit for shorter periods of time (5-15 minutes at a time, e.g. when using the bathroom or during meals), but you should avoid direct pressure on the transplanted area. It is especially important to avoid movements that brush or roll over the transplanted area.
  In relation to the surgery, your plastic surgeon will explain to you what areas to be mindful of, what type of chairs you can safely use, and which ones you should avoid.
- **Third and fourth week:**
  You can do moderate exercise that increases your heart rate: Biking, long walks, easy runs. You can resume work. You can lay in whatever position you please.
- **After the fourth week:**
  You may sit as you prefer and resume sports including swimming, weight training and contact sports.
- **Sex:** We advise you to be careful during the first 2 to 3 weeks.
  Until four weeks after the surgery you should avoid direct physical manipulation of the but-tocks.

Follow-up

We would like to see you about 2 weeks after surgery for thread removal and a short follow-up. 3 months after the surgery, the plastic surgeon will evaluate the result and take pictures, measure the volume of your hips and buttocks and assess with you if additional fat transplant treatment is needed to achieve your desired result. 1 year after the final treatment we will schedule for your last follow-up. Pictures are taken, and the buttock volume is measured again.

Subsequent effects

Pain, swelling and bruises

In the first days after the surgery there will be pain, swelling and bruises both on the buttocks but more often where the liposuction was performed. This is usually at its worst a couple of days after the surgery. Much like how soreness in the legs after a long run often increases in the first couple of days after the run. The pain slowly subsides during the following weeks.

Infection

There is a small risk of infection in the incisions. If this happens a tablet treatment with peni-cillin or another antibiotic may be necessary.

Changes in sensitivity or numbing

You can experience changes in the sensitivity of the skin or numbing of the operated areas. This can be a mix of reduced and heightened sensitivity. This gradually subsides after the sur-gery but may persist for a couple of weeks.

Complications

Smaller augmentation of the buttocks than expected (2%)

In rare cases, only a small margin of the fat cells survives the fat transfer. It is still not clear why it happens, but it may be that the immune system “overreacts”, and attacks the cells. If this happens to you, we will most likely advice against a new fat transfer treatment.

Irregularity of the skin or asymmetry

Experience shows that shrinkage happens somewhat symmetrically. If you are one of the few women for whom the cells survive poorly, the result may be asymmetric, irregular or tempo-rarily harder to the touch than normal fat tissue. This stiffness consists of normal scar tissue and softens during the following months.

Sometimes, unevenness or dimples can occur in the skin where the fat was harvested. The risk increases with the amount of fat harvested.

Scar tissue and calcifications

If smaller lumps of fat cells die, microcalcifications can occur in the fat tissue in the buttocks over time. The calcifications cannot be noticed or sensed. If larger lumps of fat cells die, scar tissue and larger calcifications can appear which can be bothersome. With time, they soften and reduce naturally. In rare cases, larger lumps can be so bothersome that they have to be removed surgically. The technique we use serves to avoid this complication.

Fat cells that are introduced to the vascular system

Some clinics also place fat cells into the muscles of the buttocks as a supplement to transplant-ing only to the fat layer that covers the buttocks. That involves risk of introducing the fat cells into the larger blood vessels under the muscles. The fat may be transported with the blood elsewhere in the body, which is both inconvenient and potentially dangerous. For this reason we have chosen not to transplant fat cells into the muscles but only into the layer of fat that covers the muscles. As mentioned before, that means there is an upper limit to how much can be transferred during one single surgery. On the other hand, there is no unnecessary risk asso-ciated to the gentler approach.

New forms of treatment

When new treatments are introduced in Denmark, the Danish Board of Health (Sundheds-styrelsen) evaluates each case to assess if the new treatment is so different or de-manding that special precautions should be taken. The Board of Health has deemed that fat transfers do not require any special precautions.

At Printzlau Privathospital we consider fat transfer surgery safe and secure.

Regardless, we would like to contribute to continued development of this new treatment, so that the method can be improved and benefit more patients in the future. Therefore, the treatment is performed as a “protocolled procedure”. This means that every individual wom-an is evaluated carefully before the treatment, and that a standardized method is used. There are also particular protocols for subsequent consultations and follow-up. This ensures that the results achieved at Printzlau Privathospital can be documented and used in further develop-ment of this type of treatment.