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PRIVATHOSPITAL

Information on inner thigh plasty

Who is eligible for inner thigh plastic plasty?

The most frequent cause of loose skin on the inner thighs is a large weight loss. The problem of loose skin on the inner thighs is most often felt by women whom have larger fat storages on the thighs, especially if suffering from obesity.

But looseness of the skin on the thighs is also part of the natural aging process. As we age the skin loses its elasticity. Furthermore, weight loss and loss of muscle with age will also contribute to making the skin loose. Hereditary factors also have an influence of how much fat there is on the thighs and on the characteristics of the skin. Other lifestyle choices such as smoking has a damaging effect on the skin's elasticity, which means that loose skin on the inner thighs can be seen at a relatively younger age.

Course of the operation, from pre-examination to checkup

Pre-examination

At the first visit, the plastic surgeon will, together with you, evaluate your wishes in respects with possibilities and limits. If it is deemed to be feasible and safe to proceed with thigh surgery, it will be evaluated which type of operation suits you the most. You will be informed about what is realistic to expect after the operation, what sideeffects the operation has as well as which risks the operation entails. The plastic surgeon will evaluate your health and whether it is necessary to do blood tests or other examinations before the operation can be carried out. A photo of your thighs will be taken, which can be used as a "before and after"

photo, if the operation is carried out.

As a private patient you have the right to, and is advised, to bring an assessor to your preexamination. This gives you a good opportunity to discuss pros and cons in having your operation done, also after you leave the clinic. Legislation on “cosmetic treatment” also constitutes that there must pass 1 week from the pre-examination before you can book an appointment for the operation. This serves to protect you by preventing you from making any rash decisions and undergo an impulsive cosmetic operation. Publicly outsourced patients are not bound by this legislation, but is recommended to follow the same precautions.

The operation

There are several different techniques used to tighten the skin on the thighs. Depending on the extent of the problem, the incision can be varied so that different amount of skin is removed. In the lighter cases, the incision is typically made all the way up in the groin, but in most cases it is necessary to have an additional incision down along the inner side of the thigh towards the knee. The operation is often supplemented with a liposuction. In the cosmetic operations, this will improve the aesthetic result, but with a larger inner thigh surgery, a liposuction is done in order to spare the small lymphatic vessels and thus prevent subsequent swelling of the lower legs and feet.

Cosmetic inner thigh surgery often takes 3 hours under full anesthesia, and requires hospitalization until the next day.

You must expect to take 2-3 weeks off from work.

Inner thigh surgery after a large weight loss

Especially women experience considerable problems due to loose skin on the inner thighs after a large weight loss. The problems is partly caused by the surplus of skin, but also the fact that the skin is loose and makes some physical activities difficult. Some women have considerable residual fat storages on inner and outer thighs despite their weight loss.

Inner thigh surgery after a large weight loss is very different from the traditional smal-

ler procedures in which the scars could be placed up in the groin. After a large weight loss, the surplus skin is often so voluminous, that a vertical incisions from high up in the groin and down to the knee is required to achieve a sufficient result. The operation is initiated with an extensive liposuction of the area of skin which is to be removed. This of course reduces the size of the thigh, but is primarily done to spare the many lymphatic vessels which runs in the deeper layers of the skin along the inner thigh. Destroying the lymphatic vessels will cause permanent swelling tendencies in the lower legs and feet (lymphedema).

Inner thigh surgery is typically done as an independent procedure and not in combination with other procedures. Simultaneous surgery on the outer thighs is not advisable (becase of the risk of impairing the bloodcirculation of the skin). In general there is a bigger risk of healing complications and infections when having inner thigh surgery, which is why a complication of the inner thighs could complicate the operations in the other regions. Inner the surgery typically takes about 4 hours and requires hospitalization until the next day.

You must expect to take work off for about 3-5 weeks.

Plastic surgery after bariatric surgery (gastric bypass and gastric sleeve)

Research shows that the risks of complications following plastic surgery are increased for patients whom have undergone bariatric surgery. If you have undergone such operations, you must expect a life long treatment with dietary supplements, and it is very important that you follow the recommended intake of supplements such as vitamins and minerals as you approach the time of the operation. You must also be careful to have a healthy and varied diet in the period leading up to your operation. After having bariatric surgery, a year and a half will have to pass before you will be offered any plastic surgical correction. This is because the metabolism must be allowed to become as stable as possible, so the risks of complications are minimized.

Side effects

Scars

The scars after inner thigh surgery are problematic. With cosmetic surgery in which the scars are placed in the groin, as time passes they have a tendency to move down to the inner thighs, (migrate) or with women to pull on the labia.

With larger inner thigh surgery, you will not experience these problems, but the scar will be visible on the thigh itself and unfortunately has a tendency to become wide. In the first 3 months the scars are red and swollen, hereafter they slowly grow light and flat. It may take a whole 2 years before the final result of the scars can be evaluated.

Temporary swelling of lower legs and feet

It is common for the lower legs and feet to swell after having inner thigh surgery. It may take up to several weeks before the subsides completely. It is important that you keep your legs elevated as much as possible. In difficult cases, supportive socks should be used around the clock, and the patient should have massages by a physio therapist.

Complications

Hematoma (postoperative bleeding)

After the operation the blood pressure rises. This may cause one of the many blood vessels which has been divided and coagulated during the operation to burst and cause blood clotting under the skin. If it is a case of larger bleeding it is necessary to operate anew. If this is the case it almost always happens while you are still hospitalized, and the reoperation is proceeded with immediately by your personal plastic surgeon.

Infections

Infection is caused by bacteria that has either come into contact with your body under the operation, or, more commonly, into your body through the new scar after you have returned to your home. In most cases the infection in the scar is superficial; this can be treated by local treatment and anti-biotics. In rare cases the infection can spread inwards and make it

necessary to open up or drain the scar under renewed hospitalization, as well as intravenous antibiotic treatment. In these critical cases, the infection could possibly destroy the results of the operation.

Poor healing

With any of the larger plastic operations there is a risk of subsequent impaired healing causing the scar to open. This defect is typically treated ”conservatively” and heals from the bottom. The scar can become wide and ugly corresponding to the area in question, and if this is the case you will be offered a later correction (about a year after the operation). In difficult cases it may be necessary attempting to close the scar under antibiotic-cover.

Lymphoedema

In some rare cases patients experience long lasting swelling of the lower legs and feet. This condition requires treatment with compromising stockings and special physiotherapy. With most patients this swelling will subside and with time disappear completely.

Nerve damage

In connection with the operation the sensory nerves of the skin can be damaged. This causes an area on the leg to be numb. This condition is irritating but does not have any effect on the movements of the leg.

Hypertrophic scarring

With some patients a lot of scarring tissue is formed, this is called hypertrophic scarring. This condition causes large red scars. The scars can be treated over several months with band-aids, and in the more difficult cases by an injection of a steroid. In rare cases it can be attempted to surgically correct a disfiguring scar later on.

Durability

Lifting the skin and tissue of humans does not stop the aging processes. There are no types of cosmetic surgery of this kind which “last forever”. However, that which is removed will

not return. Renewed overweight and weight loss will also cause the skin to loosen once more.

The “durability” is partly individual and affected by genetic factors as well as outside factors such as smoking. The “durability” will also be different dependent on the type of procedure, thus, the bigger and the more open the surgery, the more effect and therefore longer durability of the result.