**What to Expect: Abdominoplasty or “Tummy tuck”**

A cosmetic surgical procedure to flatten and contour the abdomen by tightening the abdominal muscles and removing excess fat and skin. The belly button would be repositioned as the skin is tightened. This procedure is rarely covered by insurance and is a self-pay procedure.

**Procedure Details**

Through a horizontal incision from hip-to-hip, weakened abdominal muscles are repaired and sutured while excess fat and skin is removed. The belly button is repositioned and sutured into place.

* **Duration of surgery**: 2 hours
* **Hospital stay**: No overnight stay. You will need extra help around the house for 1-2 weeks after surgery.

**Before Surgery**

You may be scheduled to undergo pre-operative testing with the Anesthesia team in the Weiner Center, where they will review your medications and medical problems. Do not eat or drink after midnight the evening before your surgery. You may take required medications with a sip of water. Call the Weiner Center at 617) 732-7484 with questions about your medications and when to stop them.

**After Surgery Care**

It is normal to feel tired and washed out after surgery. Often the pain medication and anesthetic will make you feel tired. Pace yourself according to how you feel. Total bed rest is not desirable – you should walk several times a day beginning the day after surgery. Your abdomen will feel very tight after surgery and it may be difficult to stand straight for the first week after surgery. Many patients will sleep with a pillow behind their back for the first few days.

* **Pain**: You will be given a prescription for a narcotic pain medication, such as Oxycodone. This medication may cause constipation, nausea and drowsiness and you should not consume this with alcohol or drive when taking this medication. You should take an over-the-counter stool softener (Colace or Senna) to prevent constipation. You may also take over-the-counter Tylenol or Iburprofen for pain. Your abdomen will be numb for months. This will improve with time.
* **Scars and stitches**: There will be a horizontal scar from hip-to-hip and around the belly button with all dissolving stitches. There is often skin glue overlying your incisions which will flake off in 2-3 weeks.
* **Drains**: You will go home with 2 suction drains, one at each hip. These drains are left in place until the output is less than 20ml in 48 hours. These usually remain in for 7-14 days but can remain in longer. You will receive information on how to care for the drains after surgery.
* **Abdominal Binder**: Wear the binder at all times until 12 weeks after surgery.
* **Activity:** Walking is important to reduce risk of post-operative problems. No heavy exercise for at least 3-4 weeks after surgery. No abdominal exercise or heavy lifting for 12 weeks.
* **Bathing/Showering**: Avoid showering until your drains have been removed. You may sponge bath but do not get the drain sites wet.
* **Driving**:You may resume driving when you are off all narcotic pain medication and feel comfortable turning quickly if there was an emergency.
* **Follow up:** Schedule a postoperative appointment with Dr. Talbot’s clinic 1 week after surgery. Call 617-732-4288 with any questions or concerns.