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Dr. O'Toole's got the answers. Send an email and receive a confidential reply from Dr. O'Toole.

[Email Dr. O'Toole](#)**Is Midriff "Pouch" Making You Miserable?****Declare 2008 the Year You Conquer It**

Many people develop "pouches" in their stomach area after a few pregnancies, yo-yo dieting or just as a result of aging. There's a weakening of their muscular corset, and sometimes it's accompanied by skin laxity. No amount of exercise seems to resolve the problem.

These are the people for whom a "tummy tuck" (abdominoplasty) is a perfect solution. Tummy tucks work best on patients who:



- Are not planning to become pregnant in the future
- Are not planning to lose a lot of weight their weight is stabilized
- Have excess or loose, sagging abdominal skin
- Have weakened abdominal muscles that don't respond to exercise.

You Might Need Only a Mini-Tummy Tuck...

If your skin laxity and muscle weaknesses are confined to the area below your navel, a mini-tummy tuck might be a good option for you. The scar will be a great deal shorter, and an incision around the navel is not required.

...The Other End of the Spectrum: The Lower Body Lift

Obese patients who undergo bariatric surgery come to me for a more extensive type of midriff re-contouring, the Lower Body Lift. I'm getting more and more requests to execute this procedure.



The Lower Body Lift removes sagging skin of the abdomen, outer thighs, buttocks, hips, and waist, all of it in a single operation. The incisions extend completely around the body to remove a "belt" of excess skin and fat. (Another common name for this procedure is a "belt lipectomy.")

The majority of women, however, just need a traditional tummy tuck. It resolves their midriff problems and lets them wear slim jeans, close-fitting dresses and other attractive styles once again.

How the Tummy Tuck Is Done

The tummy tuck requires a horizontal incision across the lower abdomen (within or above the pubic area). The length of the incision varies depending on the amount of skin to be removed.

The vertical muscles in your abdomen will be pulled together and stitched in a new position close to where they were in your youth. Excess skin will be removed along the incision. In some cases an incision around the navel is made so that the excess skin above the navel is pulled downward and removed. The navel's position remains unchanged.

If there's a large amount of fat as well as excess skin, liposuction will be used to remove the fat.

How Long Does It Take?

- From 2-3 hours, under general anesthesia.

There Will Be a Scar

Keep in mind, the tummy tuck leaves a long scar across the bottom of your abdomen above the pubic area. If you can live with this, and you prefer it to your chronic problem with excess skin and a "pouch" belly, then you're a good candidate for tummy tuck.

The scar is placed where it will be hidden by panties or a swimsuit. Although it's considered permanent and visible, it will fade over time.

Recovery

- You'll need to be driven home, and will require occasional help for a few days.
- You'll wear a support garment for two weeks after surgery. You should be able to return to work or school after that.
- Within two weeks the drainage tubes put in to prevent fluids from accumulating will be removed.
- You'll have to avoid exercises that work the abdominal muscles for three months. Low-impact exercise can be resumed within 2-3 weeks.
- High-impact exercise may be resumed within 6-8 weeks.

Your Results

Abdominoplasty produces long-lasting results, as long as you maintain your weight and do not become pregnant. As with all cosmetic procedures, the final result will be apparent after about one year.

Bonus Lose Those Stretch Marks

Stretch marks on the lower abdomen can often be removed during the procedure. However, it may not be possible to remove all of the stretch marks.

Is It for You?

If you've had it with "Abs" classes that exhaust you without giving you results, clothing that develops midriff bumps, or a spare tire that ruins your profile, you may be ready for a tummy tuck. We've done it on dozens of satisfied patients who tell us the results are well worth the down time.

The great thing is that once the healing is over, you've gotten rid of a chronic and annoying problem forever.

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**See Your
Procedure**in **3D**