



RESHAPE & RESTORE

Arm Lift (Brachioplasty)

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Introduction

Reshape & Restore has put together this factsheet for anyone who is considering an arm lift. We understand that undergoing a surgical procedure is not often an easy decision, and you may have many questions.

The aim of this factsheet is to outline the details of the arm lift procedure, explaining how it works, how it's carried out and what to expect from the results. Being fully informed about the potential risks and complications of surgery, can help to answer any concerns which may help you in making a clear decision.

Every patient's surgery is a unique experience and the approach we take at Reshape & Restore is tailored to suit your specific needs. It is important to understand that as the requirements of each patient differ, so does the outcome. This will depend on a number of factors and with our guidance, we can help you to understand the realistic results that can be achieved.

Why have an arm lift?

The arm lift, or brachioplasty, is used to address excess fat and skin on the upper arms. 'Bingo wings' are a common concern that can often make the arms look baggy which causes aesthetic concern for those who are affected. General ageing can lead to less elasticity in the skin which results in loose skin which hangs off the arms. Weight gain can also cause this area of the body to become larger in size, with fatty tissue also contributing to 'wobbly' upper arms. Losing weight also has the same effect, however it is usually because the size and shape of the arm has caused the skin to stretch. The arm lift procedure can reduce the amount of skin and fatty tissue on the upper arms to create a tighter, firmer, more slender appearance.

The consultation

The consultation is the most important part of any treatment journey. Not only does it give you the chance to meet your surgeon, it provides the opportunity to discuss what is concerning you and what you are hoping to achieve from surgery. There are a variety of factors we need to consider before recommending any procedure, including: general health, skin type, risk of bleeding, how well you're likely to heal, smoking status, alcohol consumption and medications. We also examine the skin and fatty deposits on the upper arms, and we'll demonstrate the appearance you are likely to achieve. We'll provide information about how the procedure is carried out, any potential risks and complications, and what to expect during the recovery period. The aim of the consultation is to give you a better understanding of what undergoing surgery involves and what it can mean for you. As there is a lot of information to absorb, we don't expect you to make a decision there and then. It is our policy at Reshape & Restore to offer a second consultation at a later date so you have had some time to think, and consider the details of the operation - including reading any information leaflets that have been provided by us. In many cases a person goes away and finds they have other questions that weren't thought of at the time, which can then be addressed at the second consultation. Only when both you and us are completely certain that undergoing surgery is the right option for you, will we make an appointment. During this session we will also take some photographs of your 'before' appearance and give you the opportunity to speak with past patients - this has proven to be very valuable for many of our patients.

What happens during the procedure?

Removing excess skin and fatty tissue during the arm lift, is usually done through an incision made on the underside of the upper arm. The length of this cut will

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depend on how much needs to be extracted, and can range from a small cut made in the armpit (axilla), to a longer incision that runs from the armpit to the elbow (longitudinal incision). The depth of these incisions usually reach the layer of muscle, and allow for the skin to be trimmed as needed. We can also use liposuction in combination with this procedure to help remove small amounts of unwanted fat, before closing the wounds. The procedure usually takes around 2 hours to perform, and a general anaesthetic is used.

On the day of your surgery, you will be asked not to eat or drink anything from midnight, and you should not apply any creams, lotions or make-up to the arms. Our patients often spend one night recovering in hospital before being discharged, however, it is not unusual for someone to spend two or three nights with us. We usually advise that you have someone drive you home from the hospital and also to stay with you on your first night at home.

What can i expect after the procedure?

Before we discharge you we will ensure you have been provided with suitable pain relief advice and some ointment to apply regularly to the wounds while they heal. It is not recommended that you use aspirin or brufen as these medications can increase bruising and the risk of postoperative bleeding.

We may need to place drains in the arms after the procedure, which may be taken out before you go home - otherwise they will be removed at your first follow-up appointment. Dressings may need to be worn for around 7 - 10 days, and will also be removed at the first follow-up appointment. Your arms will have some degree of swelling, tenderness and bruising, immediately following the procedure. The skin may also feel tight, and you may experience some temporary numbness. These effects are expected to gradually settle over the next few weeks, and we ask that you keep the arms dry for 1 week. You will find that sleeping on your back with your arms propped up on pillows for around 2 weeks after surgery will help to minimise discomfort and swelling. At your first appointment we aim to remove any stitches, if your healing allows. You should then be able to shower, using non-perfumed products and warm water. When drying your arms it is better to pat them gently using a soft towel, as rubbing will be uncomfortable and may disturb the wounds.

Having surgery can be hard on the body and it will use a lot of energy while it heals and recovers. You will benefit from taking it easy for a few weeks, only undertaking light duties and keeping activity levels low. Heavy lifting, rigorous exercise, swimming and the gym should be avoided for between 4 and 6 weeks. You can expect to need up to 2 weeks off work, depending on your job, when you should feel more comfortable to drive and resume normal daily activities. Our aftercare programme entails a series of follow-up appointments made approximately 1 week, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months after surgery. Your healing, recovery and development of results will be closely monitored during this time, and we will provide you with any necessary advice to ensure the outcome is effective.

What are the risks of surgery?

People who undergo a surgical procedure are usually concerned about how much scarring will be left behind. At Reshape & Restore we use modern surgical techniques which consider where incisions are made, and where scars will form. With the arm lift (brachioplasty), incisions are made on the underside of the arms, and in natural folds where this is possible. This allows for scarring to be as discreet as possible, and may even help scarring to be hidden under short sleeves.

In some cases a person is prone to developing hypertrophic scars, which can be particularly thick or raised from the skin. During our follow-up procedures we will monitor how your scars are developing and if hypertrophic scars are becoming likely, there are ways we can treat this in the future.

During the consultation we will discuss potential complications, which are always a risk when undergoing surgery. Haematoma is a condition where blood collects under the skin, and is a risk in the first few hours after the procedure. If this occurs we will need to take you back to the theatre to have it removed. Infection is fairly uncommon and careful aftercare is often the best way to prevent an infection from developing, and a course of antibiotics will help to clear it up. We mentioned temporary numbness as a possible side effect, but in some very uncommon cases this can be prolonged. It happens if the nerves are bruised and don't start to work as quickly as expected. Although it can cause some alarm, in most cases it does resolve itself in time and doesn't remain permanent.

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It is important to maintain your mobility while your body is recovering. You should try to move around regularly as you may risk developing Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), a condition where a blood clot forms in the leg. This only happens in around 1% of cases and we provide medication for you to take after the procedure to minimise the chance of this occurring.

If at any time you are concerned with your healing, or experience prolonged side effects / a burning sensation / discharge from the wounds, you are welcome to contact the Reshape & Restore team. Particular symptoms to look out for include: temperature above 38.5, pain and discomfort that is not relieved through painkillers, bleeding or discharge from the wounds and sudden swelling at the wounds.

Surgery comes with no guarantee of happiness and cosmetic surgery should not be undertaken lightly. Before proceeding, you must be certain that you can cope both physically and mentally should any complications arise as a result of your decision to undergo a surgical procedure. For this reason we recommend that you do not hide the fact from friends or family, rather you involve them in the decision making process so you can be sure you have an adequate support network should you need it.

What results can i expect?

Removing unwanted fat and excess skin from the upper arms will help to reduce their overall shape and size. Reshape & Restore pride themselves on producing natural looking results, and when the final outcome has developed - at around 12 weeks - the skin will be tighter, and the upper arms will look slimmer, overall. The outcome of the arm lift procedure can be long-term, and in some cases, provides a permanent solution - especially when a healthy and active lifestyle is maintained. However, it's important to note that ageing skin will continue to progress, and elasticity will continue to decline. This may result in the skin becoming loose in the future.

Disclaimer

We are unable to make any guarantees to the outcomes of your procedure as the results of cosmetic surgery differ from patient to patient. It is prudent to note that whilst potential outcomes may have been discussed, these can sometimes be modest. Beauty is entirely subjective, and therefore what is good / achievable for one person may not be good / achievable for another. We can only guide you to what we expect your outcome to be, during the consultation. It is also possible that post procedure, other areas of the body may become more noticeable such as: arms, flanks or thighs. This is more common with procedures such as breast augmentation or tummy tuck.