



WATERFRONT

PRIVATE HOSPITAL

PREPARING FOR YOUR SURGERY

We provide instructions that can start as early as two weeks before your surgery. These help limit unwanted medical events (complications) during and after surgery. This information will also help your body and mind prepare for surgery and healing.

Medications, Supplements, and Recreational drugs

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) - Avoid medications containing aspirin (including baby aspirin), ibuprofen or other NSAIDs for 10-14 days before surgery. These medications may increase bleeding. It takes time for the medications to get out of your system and for your system to return to its baseline level of functioning.

Supplements - There is no problem with taking supplements and multivitamins in the run-up to your surgery (weeks and months in advance), but **you should stop ALL supplements (vitamins, herbal and homoeopathic) for 10-14 days before surgery.** There is little evidence that taking supplements 1-2 weeks before surgery is helpful, and many can interfere with anaesthesia, bleeding time, immune function, and healing time.

Prescribed medications - Medications prescribed by your GP (mentioned in the clinic letter) should be taken as normal unless advised otherwise.



Street or 'recreational' drugs, such as heroin, LSD and cocaine, can strongly interact with the anaesthetic. Cocaine and ecstasy are two drugs that affect the nervous system. They may excite your heart, producing dangerous swings in blood pressure and heart rate during and after the operation.

You may need to wait two to four weeks before resuming herbal supplements and over-the-counter medications. However, you may take ibuprofen if prescribed for pain control, as evidence suggests that it does not increase the risk of bleeding **after** plastic surgery procedures.

Smoking, Alcohol, and Presurgical diet

Nicotine in cigarettes (and vaping products) reduces blood flow to the tissues and negatively affects healing. Stop smoking (and using nicotine-containing products) at least 3-4 weeks before surgery and refrain from using them for at least that length of time after surgery.

Alcohol can interfere with medications and thin out blood, leading to excessive bleeding. So, refrain from alcohol a week before and two weeks after surgery.

A healthy and balanced diet should be maintained for a few weeks before surgery. The best foods are whole foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, eggs, beans, avocados, nuts, seeds and whole grains. Avoid processed foods and refined carbohydrates, which can promote inflammation. You can take supplements and multivitamins but remember to stop these 10-14 days before surgery.

Friends & Family

Most relatives and friends become more supportive once you have decided to proceed with surgery.

It is always helpful if you are in a position where you can tell friends or family about your decision to have surgery. If you find yourself in a position where you have a complication or a problem – it is much easier if your friends/ family are already aware that you have had surgery.

For the first 24 hours after anaesthesia, you may have memory lapses and slow reaction time. Only make important decisions the following day. Please arrange for a family member or friend to stay with you for a night or two to help. **You must have a responsible adult with you for the first night if you have a general anaesthetic for your surgery.**

Managing anxiety and stress before surgery

“I’m freaking out. Can you help me before surgery?”

It is normal to feel anxious before surgery.

For some, the idea of surgery and anaesthesia can be scary (around 30% of patients are more afraid of the anaesthetic than of the actual operation), while others worry about pain, bruising, and the inconvenience of recovery.

Patients with an anxiety disorder may be more prone to surgical anxiety and fear than the average patient. The reasons for surgical anxiety vary from fear of the unknown to having a bad experience with previous surgeries. Concerns about the outcome of surgery can also cause surgical anxiety.

Ensure that fears and anxiety don't become too overwhelming.

Severe anxiety can cause unpleasant symptoms and stress. Typical symptoms include a pounding heart, a racing heart (fast pulse), irregular heartbeat, nausea, a nervous stomach, shortness of breath and sleep problems.

Anxiety can make it harder for you to understand and remember important things you are told about the operation, such as advice about preparing for it or recovering afterwards.

Here are tips for coping with your upcoming surgery

Emotional and practical support from friends and family: secretive patients are more stressed before and after surgery.

Arm yourself with information: an important step in dealing with surgical anxiety is to become well-informed regarding your surgical treatment. A complete understanding of the procedure, why you need it, and how it's performed can relieve a great deal of worry. If you have had a bad experience with surgery or a loved one who has, speaking to us may provide reassurance that this is a different surgery and a different situation.

Distract yourself: by reading, listening to music, or using exercise or relaxation techniques.

General anaesthesia is safe, and most patients have no serious issues following anaesthesia.

Step away from stress: stress can hurt your recovery after surgery. Limit demands placed on your time, especially if they're likely to increase stress. Adjust your phone alerts so you only get the necessary ones. Inform your friends, family, and co-workers in advance of your admission that you're taking 10-14 days off to rest and relax.

Warnings

Many people who **smoke** tend to smoke even more when feeling anxious. Even if that calms their nerves in the short term, smoking significantly increases the risk of complications after surgery.

Herbal supplements, including teas, powders, and other all-natural plant extracts, should not be used without consulting your surgeon. Many herbs, despite the label “all-natural”, interact badly with anaesthesia and other medications. Some can cause blood thinning, heart arrhythmias, and other reactions that are not desirable during surgery.

If you have been prescribed **propranolol** for anxiety, your doctor may advise you to **stop** taking it before surgery. This is because propranolol can lower your blood pressure too much when combined with some anaesthetics.

A few things to note in advance

Once you're ready to be discharged, you must arrange a taxi or have a friend or family member take you home because **you won't be able to drive**. If you have had a general anaesthetic, you will need a responsible adult to be with you for the first night.

You may not start workouts at **the gym** for 6 weeks, although you may start gentle exercise at around 4 weeks.

On admission, all women of childbearing age will be asked **to provide a urine sample** to exclude pregnancy.



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Liposuction Aftercare

Following your liposuction procedure at Waterfront Private Hospital, we are committed to ensuring your recovery is as comfortable and speedy as possible. This leaflet provides essential aftercare instructions tailored for our liposuction patients. Remember, individual recovery experiences can vary, so consider this a general guide and always follow the personalised advice given by your healthcare team.

Before you leave the hospital

Medications – You will be provided with painkillers before discharge. These may include strong painkillers such as dihydrocodeine.

Follow-up appointments for dressing clinics – You will be handed a card with details of your first follow-up appointment and contact details for the ward if you have any concerns once you get home.

Have someone to take you home and a **responsible adult with you for the first night** (if you have had a general anaesthetic).

Information on post-surgical compression vests

- A snug, fitting compression garment is helpful for supporting your recovery in the weeks following liposuction. It can help reduce swelling and shape the body as it heals.



- You can purchase a compression garment prior to your surgery. Our team can provide suggestions based on the area treated.

Garments can be purchased through these links (use discount code QUABA). We have no affiliations with the companies:

[Macom](#)

[Lipoelastic](#)

Sizing guides are available on the Macom and Lipoelastic websites.

When you get home

Week 1

Get plenty of rest.

Sleep in whichever position is comfortable.

Rest: Prioritize rest, allowing your body to heal. Engage in light walks around your home to encourage circulation.

Compression Garment: If using a compression garment, wear it continuously, only removing it as advised for showering.

Showering: You can shower, taking care not to disturb any dressings or sutures. Pat the area dry gently.

Managing Discomfort: It's normal to experience pain and swelling. Use prescribed medications as directed.

Activity Level: Keep activities light. Avoid strenuous exercises or lifting heavy objects.

Diet: Maintain a healthy, balanced diet and increase your fluid intake to help reduce swelling.

Bruising gets worse before it improves, especially if you have had a lot of liposuction.

Your **mood** may fluctuate after surgery – this is normal!

Avoid smoking for at least two weeks, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

Avoid alcohol when taking pain medications. Even if you are not taking pain medications, it is advisable to avoid alcohol for three weeks as it can cause fluid retention, which may worsen swelling.

You can consider **driving** if you must towards the end of the first week if you are not taking strong painkillers and are confident performing an emergency break.

Nurse appointment at the end of week 1

You will have a nurse appointment to **remove any dressings** at the end of week 1. The nurses will check you are OK and have no problems. They can answer any questions.

Any **paper tape (steri-strips)** covering the incisions **will be removed if they are still on. Any non-dissolvable stitches will usually be removed at this stage.**

Returning to work

Return to work may be an option at the start of week two if your job is office-based/non-physical. If your job is more physical, you may need to wait until the end of week 2 before returning to work.

Week 2

Most patients will still take painkillers by the start of week 2, but some may feel they no longer require any medication.

The treated area will still be swollen and bruised, and this should improve during the second week.

Compression Garment: Continue wearing as advised to support healing and achieve optimal contouring results.

You should be fine **going about your day-to-day business**.

Weeks 3 and 4

Moisturise your incisions with a plain moisturising cream (Aveeno, E45) or bio-oil.

You will feel more yourself, and most of the swelling (80-90%) will have settled.

You may still feel **firm areas** at the treatment site.

You may feel **shooting-type pains** as nerves knit back together.

When can I fly after surgery?

Check with your airline and insurance company before flying. It'll depend on your airline's regulations and the flight duration. If in doubt, please ask your surgeon.

Risk of DVT

If you're flying after recent surgery, especially when your mobility has been restricted, you're at an increased risk of [deep vein thrombosis \(DVT\)](#), a blood clot in one of the deep veins in your body, usually in your legs.

Guidance

For medium-haul (3-6 hours) and long-haul (6-12 hours) flights, and as a guide, allow 2 weeks after surgery. You could fly around 1 week after surgery for short-haul (less than 3 hours) flights. You can reduce your DVT risk by drinking plenty of water, using your Ted stockings, and moving around on the plane. The risk of developing a travel-related DVT is low, even if you're classed as moderate to high risk.

Travel Insurance

Check your travel insurance policy carefully. You may need to inform the insurance company that you have recently had surgery.

From 1 month to 6 months

The last 10% or so of the swelling will settle over this period, and the treated area will feel more natural.

Scars should fade but can still be red at 6 months. Please **continue moisturising and massaging** your scars with bio-oil or plain moisturiser.

Shooting pains and other pains may persist as nerves heal or after exercise. This is normal.

Any **Numbness** should gradually improve over this period.

Exercise

You can resume gentle exercise after 4 weeks and build up to more strenuous exercise by the end of week 6.

After 6 weeks, you should be able to return to doing whatever you were doing before surgery.

When to call/ get in touch

- If you have increased swelling or bruising that is not settling,
- If you notice swelling in one or both of your legs or feel short of breath, this may indicate a clot in one of your veins or lungs— deep vein thrombosis or pulmonary embolism.
- If you have increased redness along the incisions (this may be a sign of infection).
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects from medications, such as rash, nausea, headache, or vomiting,
- If you have a temperature over 38 degrees Celsius.
- If you have any **persistent** yellowish or greenish discharge from the incisions.

Further advice

If you are uncertain about anything or require further advice, please contact us at hello@waterfronthospital.co.uk