

ARM REDUCTION

(BRACHIOPLASTY)

Background

As we get older, the skin of our upper arms begin to sag (bingo wings), creating a loose area of skin that can hang down. This condition can also occur after substantial weight loss. It can be corrected by removing skin and fatty tissue (sometimes in combination with liposuction); however, the surgery does leave a noticeable scar.

The treatment

This procedure is usually carried out under general anaesthetic with an overnight stay. Depending on what technique is used scars are usually placed along the inside of the arm from elbow to armpit.

Duration of surgery

Depending on the complexities of the case, surgery usually takes 2-3 hours

Complications of Surgery

Unfortunately complications can occur following any surgery and patients need to be fully aware of this. Mr Banwell does his utmost to minimise the complication rate and likes to practise in a safe manner. The commonest complications are scarring, bleeding, haematoma formation and the need to return to theatre, infection, numbness, asymmetry in the healing and the final result, clots in the legs and lungs, ruckling of scars and swelling of hands and fingers.

After Surgery

Mr Banwell recommends you commence wearing a compression garment immediately after your drains are removed and you should continue wearing this day and night for 8 weeks. After the surgery the wound will be dressed with brown micropore tape which is waterproof. You will be able to shower the day after leaving hospital after which you can pat the tape dry with a towel and then use a hair-dryer on a warm setting to ensure the tape is completely dry. You will normally be able to return to work after 2 weeks depending upon how you feel.

Recovery

In the first week following surgery you should take things very easy. The following week you will find you can do much more and may be ready to return to work. You should avoid lifting and carrying for 2 weeks following surgery and strenuous exercise/physical activity should be avoided for 6 weeks following the surgery to prevent damage to your arms. Many patients find gentle cardiovascular exercises are fine after a few weeks. You can drive when you feel safe to perform an emergency stop otherwise your insurance company may invalidate your insurance.

Success and satisfaction

The operation has a high success rate and patients feel more confident in their clothes.

Important Notice

Mr Banwell strongly advises you stop smoking prior to surgery as this can affect the outcome of surgery and increase complication rates. Nutritional supplements, anticoagulant medication and blood thinners (eg. aspirin and brufen) all increase the risk of bleeding and should be stopped prior to surgery unless otherwise instructed.

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NOTES & QUESTIONS

AT A GLANCE

SURGERY TIME

2.5 hours

HOSPITAL STAY

1 night

ANAESTHETIC ASSESSMENT

No

PRE ADMISSION TESTS

Possibly

SLEEPING POSITION

Sleeping on back recommended for 4 weeks

REASONABLY MOBILE

1 day. Keep arms elevated.

WASHING

Shower after 1 day. Bath after 2 weeks

DRIVING

2 weeks

EXERCISE INCLUDING GYM

6 weeks

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Restricted Activity

FULL RECOVERY

6 weeks

TIME OFF WORK

2 weeks

GARMENTS

Compression garment for 8 weeks.