

Arm Reduction

What is arm reduction or lift?

Arm reduction removes excess skin and fat from the inner aspects of the arms. You can demonstrate this by raising both arms outstretched like 'wings'. The fold of excess skin and fat can be seen hanging down.

The common complaint is that the arms are 'flabby' or 'wobbly' and there is difficulty fitting certain clothes.

How is the surgery performed?

The operation is performed under a general anaesthetic and takes about an hour for each side.

You will usually stay in overnight; sometimes you may go home the same day.

The skin and fat to be excised is planned in such a way that the scar lies on the inner aspect of the arm. It is usually a 'T'-shaped scar (with the transverse or horizontal part of the 'T' in the armpit). The wounds are closed with dissolving sutures. You may have drains inserted.

What is the postoperative care?

Drains when used will be removed the next day before you go home. You will have supportive dressing for comfort and to reduce swelling. Your wounds will be checked 10-14 days after surgery. You should plan to be off work for about two weeks. You will need to be sensible with rigorous activities in the first few weeks.

What are the problems that may occur?

Bleeding and haematoma (collection of blood) which may require drainage, infection, small areas of superficial wound breakdown which require simple dressings, bad scar (stretched or raised), puckering at the ends of the scars, called 'dog ears', which may require revision at a later stage. Occasionally there may be fluid collection (seroma) which may need to be drained. There can be changes in sensation in the inner aspect of the forearm. With time most patients don't find this bothersome.

These notes are intended to be used with your consultation