

Thigh reduction or lift

What is thigh reduction or lift?

A thigh lift removes excess skin and fat from the inner aspects of the thighs usually in individuals who have lost a lot of weight and have excess skin on the thighs. Occasionally, other individuals who are carrying excessive fat in this area so that the thighs rub on each other uncomfortably during daily activities may also benefit. This procedure apart from improving the appearance reduces the discomfort from underwear, skin discolouration and fungal infections, and the robbing and friction between the thighs.

How is a thigh lift performed?

It is usually performed under a general anaesthetic and takes about two to three hours depending on the size of the excision.

You will need to stay in hospital for a day or two.

The amount of skin and fat to be excised is usually planned pre-operatively in such a way that the scar lies on the inner aspect of the thigh. The incisions can leave either a horizontal scar in the groin or more commonly a 'T'-shaped scar or an inverted 'L' scar (with the horizontal part of the 'T' or 'L' in the groin). The wounds are closed with dissolving sutures and dressed with surgical tape. You will usually have drains.

What is the postoperative care?

The drains will usually be removed after 24-48 hours. You will need to wear supportive or pressure garments for four to six weeks to reduce the overall tendency to swelling and fluid collection (seroma) and for support and comfort. You should plan to be off work for three to four weeks.

What are the problems that may occur after a thigh reduction or lift?

Collection of blood (haematoma) or fluid (seroma) which may require drainage, infection, areas of wound breakdown which usually heal with simple dressings, bad scar (stretched or raised), puckering at the ends of the scars, called 'dog ears', which may require revision later. Changes in sensation in the inner aspect of the groin and thigh can occur but most patients don't find this bothersome. There will be minor degrees of residual asymmetry as the two will not look exactly the same.

Did you know!

For appropriate cases, there is a minimal access thigh lift, which is a combination of liposuction and excision of skin in the groin leaving a transverse scar in the groin.