

Brachioplasty (Arm Lift) Excision of excess skin from the upper arm

Notes for Guidance

Following considerable weight loss or as a result of ageing, the presence of excess skin hanging from the upper arms gives a poor cosmetic image.

Unfortunately no matter how much one exercise's the problem remains and can only be corrected with a surgical excision of the redundant skin.

The amount of excess skin that needs to be removed determines which of the 2 following methods should be used.

Method A - Used when there is a lot of redundant skin present.

A long elliptical excision of skin is made from the inner surface of the upper arm starting from the axilla (arm pit) and continuing to about 5-10 cm above the line produced by the elbow joint. Unfortunately it leaves a permanent straight line scar on the inside surface of the arm that can be obvious when lifting or extending the arms.

Method B – Used less frequently than A.

This is for removal of small or moderate amount of redundant skin. A triangle shape of skin is removed in the skin cavity of the axilla (arm pit). The scar is a V or Y shape and is mostly hidden in the axilla.

Both procedures involve one night stay and one week off work and is performed under general anaesthetic. The sutures are removed in 2-3 weeks or internal sutures are sometimes used that do not need removal. You are advised to avoid stretching, sports, and lifting weights for one month.

Complications:

1. Quality of scar (some people heal better than others)
2. Overcorrection. (Removal of too much skin through a short scar results in a 'dog bite' effect.
3. Numbness of the area – this is very rare but can be permanent.

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This leaflet has been prepared to give a basic understanding of the procedure before a consultation takes place, and to cover many of the questions frequently asked about this type of cosmetic surgery. Final decisions should not be made until an individual assessment has taken place with the surgeon. There is no obligation on the part of the patient to undergo surgery by attending for consultation. If you have any further questions or would like to arrange a consultation please do not hesitate to call us.