Body Contouring in the Massive Weight Loss Patients: Lessons Learnt in Practice

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Abstract (300 word limit)

Post-massive weight loss (MWL) patients present a challenge in preoperative selection and optimisation, surgical approach, psychological and nutritional support, and postoperative management. We present the lessons we have learnt from our experience of body contouring the post-MWL patient.

Patient concerns are typically physical (skin excess, intertrigo and discomfort), functional (chafing, inability to exercise), social (activities and find suitable clothing) and psychological (impaired confidence, self-esteem and sexual function).

Patient selection mandates a non-smoker with a stable weight, BMI under 32, who is nutritionally adequate, psychologically robust and has social support. There is higher incidence of early postoperative complications requiring unplanned visits, so a long journey time to clinic is a relative contraindication. Patients who do not meet the selection criteria at presentation are supported through internal referral to a nutritionist, personal trainer, psychotherapist and/or bariatric surgeon, and reassessed when ready.

Patients most commonly request abdominal and breast recontouring surgery, followed by surgery to the thighs, arms, face & neck, upper back and lower back/buttocks. Breast surgery always includes mastopexy and usually incorporates auto-augmentation techniques +/- fat grafting, aiming to minimise or avoid using breast implants. We consider breast augmentation with implants, liposuction, and short-scar approaches to abdominoplasty, mastopexy or arm/thigh contouring to be ill-advised in isolation in this group.

Multiple surgeries are typical. Our principles are to keep surgical time under 4.5h, to perform the most revision-prone procedures first, and always to maintain the patient in a position physically suitable to end the sequence at any point.

The MWL patient is challenging but amongst the most rewarding to care for. The surgery is life-changing and there is no more satisfied patient group within our service. We encourage the adoption of safe and holistic approaches to care for this patient group.



Biography (150 word limit)

Fulvio Urso-Baiarda is Consultant in Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery, Chief Executive of Berkshire Grove Hospital, and Director of Eterno 360° Clinic, from where he runs the Berkshire Aesthetics Fellowship under the auspices of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons. He was awarded his medical degree and subsequent MA (Hons) from Oxford University, holds an MD in Microsurgery Research from University College London, and is a Fellow of the Royal College of Plastic Surgeons. He holds the Kay-Kilner Prize for Evidence-Based Plastic Surgery, has over seventy peer-reviewed publications and presentations, including the popular textbook "Evidence-Based Plastic Surgery", and was awarded Cosmetic Surgeon of the Year in 2017. Fulvio lives in Windsor, UK, with his wife, children and a miniature wire-haired dachshund.

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