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common procedures performed in India. For a liposabdominoplasty you would have to stay in a hospital for two to three days and the recovery time is two weeks. Heavy physical activities should not be undertaken for six weeks. To maintain the results you should maintain your weight.

Q I am interested in getting the mommy makeover, ie breast lift, tummy tuck and liposuction. I live in the USA and it's not a feasible option here as it is too expensive! I have really tried to do it with blood, sweat and tears, and I am realising it is more tears than anything else. I never struggled with weight, until I had my second child. I am now slowly losing my self-esteem day by day. I am 32 years old, weigh 80 kg and am 5' tall. I have scars from an appendix and gall bladder removal, a C-section and a tubal ligation. What are my options and how much time will the procedures take?

SHWETA, CALIFORNIA, USA

A Body contouring after pregnancy (ie a mommy makeover) usually requires the following: a liposuction and tummy tuck to correct excess fat deposits in different

areas and loose skin on the tummy, and a breast lift with or without implants to restore shape and firmness of breasts.

There are different variations in the surgeries, the choice of which will depend on the changes in your body and can be known only after a clinical examination. The tummy tuck and liposuction can be done together. Liposuction will remove the excess fat, while a tummy tuck removes the excess skin and tightens the abdomen. This will require two to five days of hospitalisation and it will take two weeks for recovery.

The breast surgery should be performed in another stage, at least a month after the first surgery. The recovery period is about two weeks. However, the breast and body work can be combined if the extent of the liposuction is not too big. In that case, you need to spend only about three weeks in Mumbai.

Q I am 33 years old and definitely not overweight. But I do have some concerns regarding my belly button area. My stomach isn't very big, but I have had two babies and had an umbilical hernia during my last pregnancy, which was repaired

when I had my gall bladder removed. Anyway, even though I am not overweight, my belly button always looks like it is frowning and there is a lot of sagging directly above it. When I had my gall bladder removed, one of the incisions was right under the belly button, but they are hardly visible.

I have heard that there is a procedure that can change the appearance of the belly button. Is this true? I would really like to change the way my belly button looks. Please let me know what my options are.

SANIJA, BANGORE

A A sad-looking, downturned belly button is common after pregnancy. This occurs from having loose skin around the navel. The problem can be corrected by a tummy tuck, which will make the tummy flat and at the same time make the navel round again. The common tummy tuck leaves behind a scar which is low and under the panty line. In some cases, where the loose skin is only above the navel, a reverse tummy tuck can be done, where the scars are hidden below the breasts, in the crease. When there is loose skin all around the belly button, minor surgery on the navel alone won't be sufficient.

Q My stomach area now measures 35 inches and I would like to reduce it to 32 inches. I have had two Caesareans, one in 1991 and the second in 1996. I currently weigh 59 kg and my height is 5' 2 1/2". What is the best procedure to reduce my size? Will hospital stay be required and how long is the recovery period?

DEEPAJI PRINCE, GULSHAN

A The tummy takes the maximum toll during a pregnancy. The downward bulge you have is due to a combination of fat and loose skin. Fine definition liposuction combined with a tummy tuck (liposabdominoplasty) will definitely help you regain a flat tummy. This is one of the most