



Dr. Mohan Thomas, M.D. (USA)
FACS (USA), leading Cosmetic
Surgeon, Walling Scholar-
ship Hospital (New York)
and Consultant, Breach Candy
Hospital, The Cosmetic
Surgery Institute, Mumbai

I am overweight by 15 kg and interested in removing fat from various parts of my body, mainly the stomach, thighs and hips. I do not want to go for a mega liposuction and would prefer a non-surgical method. Would injection lipolysis help? Also, what will be the cost of the procedure?

SEEMA RAI, JAISALMER

Non-surgical methods for fat reduction are good for moderate and small fat deposits. Larger fat deposits are better treated by liposuction. Multiple sessions would be required for the non-surgical methods

and there should be a month's gap between each session.

Among non-surgical procedures, the GNIUS system is the preferred modality for removing fat from the abdomen, sides and outer thighs, while the arms, chin and other small areas are better treated by injection lipolysis.

Non-surgical methods have been proven safe and effective, but the results may not be dramatic as after liposuction. Also, liposuction can address most areas in one session. Since you are looking for a big change in your body contour, liposuction would be more effective in terms of inches reduced and time required, and it is also cost effective.

Q I am a 30-year-old who tested HIV positive in 2003 and started medication for it in 2004. Last year, I noticed that my body has changed a lot over the years. I have lost a lot of fat on my legs, arms, butt and hips, but have gained a lot of fat on my stomach. Earlier, I had big hips and a small stomach, but now it's all gone.

How much would it cost to do plastic surgery on my arms, legs and hips? And how long would I need to be hospitalised?

HIMANI SHAH, TANZANIA

A Medication for treatment of HIV can cause lipodystrophy in many parts of the body.

Fat atrophy, where fat cells in an area disappear, is a common aesthetic problem. This can be treated with fillers and by injection of your own fat. In your case, the excess fat from the stomach can be removed by liposuction. The fat would be collected in a sterile manner and processed using a special technique. The processed fat cells can then be injected into areas where you have lost a lot of fat, especially the hips.

Both the steps can be done together and you would have to stay in the hospital for two days. I would like you to be in Mumbai for at least a week after the surgery, so as to ensure adequate follow-up.

Q When I was two years old, I had chicken pox, due to which there are two scars on my nose. The chicken pox scars are deep, round and dark brown in colour. I would like to get rid of these scars as I'm 27 years old and looking at marriage proposals. I have tried using retino ointment, which helped lighten the scars a little, but that too only after

using it for eight to nine months. Now because of this problem, I also have blackheads on my nose.

Can these scars be permanently removed through cosmetic surgery? Would skin grafting help? Or is there a better solution? If I go under the knife, will I get additional scars?

ZEBNA KHAN, VIA EM

A Chicken pox scars are usually deep pits, with some amount of colour mismatch with the surrounding skin. They are usually very small in size, therefore surgical removal or skin graft is not warranted.

The scars can be made less deep and level with the rest of the surrounding skin surface by subcision, which releases the tethered scar from the deeper layers of the skin. Subcision is a minimally invasive method and would not leave any new scars.

The pigmentation can be treated by prescription lightening creams. As you have experienced, correction of pigmentation takes a long time and only partial correction can be expected. Good camouflage makeup is the only 100 per cent solution to this problem.