

Tummy tightening by Thermage™



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Many people want tummy tightening - a flat abdomen with tight skin can be very attractive if it can be maintained. There are several issues that need to be addressed to get an abdomen that you are happy with. Firstly, the muscles have to be toned, secondly there needs to be only a small amount of fat tissue between muscle and skin, and finally, loose or crepey skin needs to be tightened.

This leaflet provides information on the third of these, the skin tightening.

Why might someone need skin tightening for the tummy?

The commonest cause of having loose or crepey skin over the abdomen is pregnancy. Even in people who did not put on much fat, the stretching of the skin of the abdomen often ruins the elasticity in this area, so even when everything else has gone back to normal, the abdominal skin is often loose and wrinkles easily, often looking like crêpe paper - hence been called crepey.

Some people get a similar problem following dramatic weight loss for precisely the same reasons - overstretching the skin causing a destruction of the elasticity.

What treatments are available?

Although muscle tone can be improved by exercise or electronic stimulation and fat can be lost by exercise, dieting or surgical procedures such as laser liposuction, the skin's elasticity cannot easily be regenerated. There are no drugs or tablets that can help this.

Traditionally, such saggy skin is removed by surgery, a procedure known as "skin tucks". Under general anaesthetic, skin is removed leaving the remainder much tighter. This can leave bruising and scars and can distort features such as the bellybutton (umbilicus).

As an alternative to surgery, it is possible to tighten up the collagen in the skin by heating it. Tightening of the collagen results in a tighter and smoother skin. This can be performed using a radio-frequency current which first of all heats the skin and then immediately cools the area to reduce discomfort. This is the basis of Thermage™.

What is Thermage™ treatment of the tummy?

To perform Thermage™ on the abdominal skin, a transfer is temporarily placed on the skin which divides the abdomen into small squares. Using these as a guide, the therapist heats each section of the skin in turn, using the Thermage™ abdominal skin tightening tip.

The tip instantly heats the skin and underlying structures, causing collagen contraction and then almost immediately, a cooling cycle starts, cooling the skin back down to reduce discomfort whilst giving maximum effect.



How long does the treatment take?

The whole treatment takes about two hours.

How long is recovery?

This is a procedure that is truly “walk-in walk-out”. There is no bruising, swelling or scarring. The treated area can be red and a little tender for an hour or two and some immediate tightening is often seen. However full improvement is not usually seen until six months has passed, as the full tightening procedure requires new collagen formation.

Are there any contraindications to having tummy tightening by Thermage™?

As Thermage™ uses radio-frequency electric current, we would not use this on anyone who has a pacemaker. Obviously, we would also not perform this on anyone who is pregnant. However apart from these, there are no absolute complications stopping anyone having the procedure.

What results will I expect?

Immediately post procedure, there can be some tightening seen in some patients. As collagen continues to tighten and new collagen is produced, skin tightening can continue over the next few months, with the end result usually seen at about six months. After six months, over 80% of people report having had pleasing results.

As with everything in medicine, different people respond differently to the treatment. Some people’s collagen tightens easily giving an excellent result, other people with less collagen

or more damaged collagen can get a far less noticeable result. One of the good things about Thermage™ is that if needed, it can be repeated soon after a treatment, to increase the chances of a satisfactory result.

If you would like to know more about Thermage™ at Absolute Aesthetics, please look at the website:

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