

Arm Lift

Brachioplasty



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®

What is an Arm Lift?

An arm lift, also known as a brachioplasty, is a surgical procedure that is used to remove excess skin and fat from the upper arms. This procedure is commonly used to address sagging or loose skin that can occur as a result of aging, weight loss, or genetics.

An arm lift is a surgical procedure that:

- Reduces excess sagging skin that droops downward
- Tightens and smoothes the underlying supportive tissue that defines the shape of the upper arm
- Reduces localized pockets of fat in the upper arm region

In general, candidates for an arm lift include:

- Adults with significant upper arm skin laxity
- Adults of any age whose weight is relatively stable and who are not significantly overweight
- Healthy individuals without medical conditions that impair healing or increase risk of surgery
- Non-smokers/vapers
- Individuals with a positive outlook and realistic expectations



Consultation & Preparing for Surgery

During your consultation be prepared to discuss:

- Your surgical goals
- Medical conditions, drug allergies, and medical treatments
- Current medications, vitamins, herbal supplements, alcohol, tobacco, and drug use
- Previous surgeries

Your surgeon will also:

- Evaluate your general health status and any pre-existing health conditions or risk factors
- Take photographs
- Discuss your options
- Discuss likely outcomes of arm lift surgery and any risks or potential complications

Prior to surgery, you may be asked to:

- Get lab testing or a medical evaluation
- Take certain medications or adjust your current medications
- Stop smoking/vaping
- Avoid taking aspirin, anti-inflammatory drugs, and herbal supplements as they can increase bleeding



Arm lift surgery may be performed in an accredited office-based surgical facility, licensed ambulatory surgical center, or a hospital.

Be sure to arrange for someone to drive you to and from surgery and to stay with you for at least the first night following surgery.

Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon questions. It's very important to understand all aspects of your arm lift surgery. It's natural to feel some anxiety, whether it's excitement for your anticipated new look or a bit of preoperative stress. Don't be shy about discussing these feelings with your plastic surgeon.

The Procedure

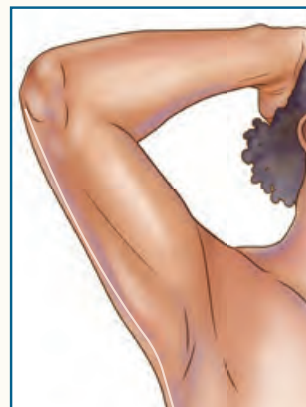
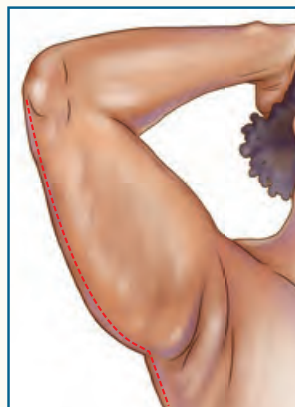
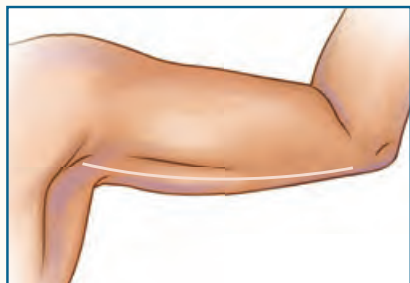
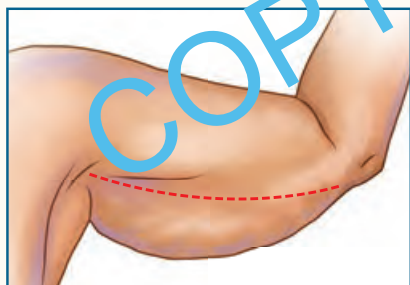
Step 1 – Anesthesia

Medications are administered for your comfort during the surgical procedures. The choices include intravenous sedation and general anesthesia. Your doctor will recommend the best choice for you.

Step 2 – The incision

Incision length and pattern depend on the amount and location of excess skin to be removed, as well as your surgeon's best judgment. Generally, incisions are placed on the inside of the arm or on the back of the arm depending on the surgeon's preference and may extend from the underarm (axilla) to just above the elbow. Excess fat may be directly excised or treated with liposuction.

Depending on your specific condition, incisions may be more limited. Then, underlying supportive tissue is tightened and reshaped with internal sutures. Finally, the skin is smoothed over the new contour of your arm.



Step 3 – Closing the incisions

Your incisions will be closed either with absorbable sutures or stitches that will be removed within one to two weeks following your arm lift.

Step 4 – See the results

The smoother, tighter contours that result from brachioplasty are apparent almost immediately following your procedure, although there will likely be swelling and bruising. Your new upper arm will be dramatically improved both in appearance and feel.

Risks & Safety

The choice to undergo arm lift surgery is a highly individual one and requires consideration of whether the potential benefits align with your desired outcomes and if the risks and complications are acceptable to you. Before the procedure, you will be asked to sign informed consent forms to confirm that you have a thorough understanding of the procedure and any associated risks and complications.

All risks will be fully discussed prior to your consent. It is important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon.

Risks can include:

- Anesthesia risks
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Poor wound healing
- Unsightly scarring
- Fluid accumulation (seroma)
- Damage to deeper structures such as nerves, blood vessels, and muscles
- Fatty tissue under the skin might die (fat necrosis)
- Numbness or other changes in skin sensation
- Pain, which may persist
- Sutures may not absorb, but spontaneously surface through the skin, causing irritation, drainage and redness
- Possible need for revisional surgery

It's important that you address all your questions directly with your plastic surgeon.

Recovery & Results

Following your surgery, dressings or bandages may be applied to your incisions and your arms may be wrapped in an elastic bandage or a compression garment to minimize swelling. A small, thin tube may be temporarily placed under the skin to drain any excess blood or fluid.

You will be given specific instructions on how to care for the surgical site and drains, medications to apply or take orally to aid healing, specific concerns to look for, and when to follow up with your plastic surgeon.

Be sure to ask your plastic surgeon specific questions about what you can expect during your individual recovery period.

- Where will I be taken after my surgery is complete?
- What medication will I be given or prescribed after surgery?
- Will I have dressings/bandages after surgery?

- When will they be removed?
- When can I resume normal activity and exercise?
- When do I return for follow-up care?

The smoother, tighter contours that result from an arm lift are apparent almost immediately following your procedure. Initial results will be obscured by swelling and bruising and a scar will remain where the incision was made.

Good results are expected from your procedure, although there is no guarantee. In some situations, it may not be possible to achieve optimal results with a single surgical procedure and another surgery may be necessary.

The results of arm lift surgery will be long lasting, provided that you maintain a stable weight and general fitness.

Following your physician's instructions is essential to the success of your surgery. It's important that the surgical incisions are not subjected to excessive force, swelling, abrasion, or motion during the time of healing. Your doctor will give you specific instructions on how to care for yourself during this time.

Recovery Period	What to expect
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor pain, swelling, and bruising (medication may be required)• Significantly limit your activity
Weeks 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will start to feel much better• Return to work (depending on your job)
Weeks 4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to wear a compression garment if indicated• Increase activity
Week 6 and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to follow instructions per your plastic surgeon



Cost

Prices for arm lift procedures can vary. A surgeon's cost may be based on their experience, the type of procedure used, and geographic office location.

Cost may include:

- Anesthesia fees
- Hospital or surgical facility costs
- Medical tests
- Post-surgery garments
- Prescriptions for medication
- Surgeon's fee

Most health insurance plans do not cover arm lift surgery, as it is considered cosmetic surgery. Ask your surgeon for a complete picture of the costs you can expect. Many plastic surgeons offer patient financing plans.

Words to know

- **Arm lift:** A surgical procedure, also known as brachioplasty, to correct sagging of the upper arms.
- **Axilla:** The underarm area.
- **Brachioplasty:** A surgical procedure, also known as arm lift, to correct sagging of upper arms.
- **General anesthesia:** Drugs and/or gases used during an operation to relieve pain and alter consciousness.
- **Hematoma:** Blood pooling beneath the skin.
- **Intravenous sedation:** Sedatives administered by injection into a vein to help you relax.
- **Liposuction:** Also called lipoplasty or suction lipectomy, this procedure vacuums out fat from beneath the skin's surface to reduce fullness.
- **Local anesthesia:** A drug injected directly to the site of an incision during an operation to relieve pain.
- **Skin laxity:** Degree of loose skin.
- **Sutures:** Stitches used by surgeons to hold skin and tissue together.

Your satisfaction involves more than a fee:

When choosing a plastic surgeon for arm lift surgery, remember that the surgeon's experience and your comfort with them are just as important as the final cost of the surgery.

Questions to ask my plastic surgeon

- ☐ Are you certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery?
- ☐ Are you a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons?
- ☐ Were you trained specifically in the field of plastic surgery?
- ☐ How many years of plastic surgery training have you had?
- ☐ Do you have hospital privileges to perform this procedure? If so, at which hospitals?
- ☐ Is the office-based surgical facility accredited by a nationally- or state-recognized accrediting agency, or is it state-licensed or Medicare-certified?
- ☐ Am I a good candidate for this procedure?
- ☐ What will be expected of me to get the best results?
- ☐ Where and how will you perform my procedure?
- ☐ What surgical technique is recommended for me?
- ☐ How long of a recovery period can I expect, and what kind of help will I need during my recovery?
- ☐ What are the risks and complications associated with my procedure?
- ☐ How are complications handled?
- ☐ What are my options if I am dissatisfied with the outcome?
- ☐ Do you have before and after photos I can look at for this procedure and what results are reasonable for me?

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Make the Right Choice

Plastic surgery involves many choices. The first and most important is selecting a member of the **American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS)**.

ASPS member surgeons meet rigorous standards:

- Board certification by the American Board of Plastic Surgery (ABPS)® or in Canada by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada*
- Complete at least six years of surgical training following medical school with a minimum of three years of plastic surgery residency training
- Pass comprehensive oral and written exams
- Graduate from an accredited medical school
- Complete continuing medical education, including patient safety each year
- Perform surgery in accredited, state-licensed, or Medicare-certified surgical facilities

Do not be confused by other official-sounding boards and certifications.

The ABPS is recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS), which has approved medical specialty boards since 1934. There is no ABMS-recognized certifying board with “cosmetic surgery” in its name. By choosing a member of The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, you can be assured that you are choosing a qualified, highly trained plastic surgeon who is board certified by the ABPS or The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.



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