



Buccal Fat Pad Excision

Buccal fat removal is the concept of modifying the deep fat of the face from inside the mouth. It is a gentle, precise and tissue-sparing procedure for facial contouring and rejuvenation. The surgery is effective for improving facial proportions, soft-tissue asymmetries and age-related lower facial heaviness.

Facial fat is composed of multiple fat compartments, arranged in deep and superficial layers. They are separated by connective tissue, forming well-defined anatomical units - known as 'fat pads'. Their function is to provide insulation and structural support throughout the facial soft-tissues.

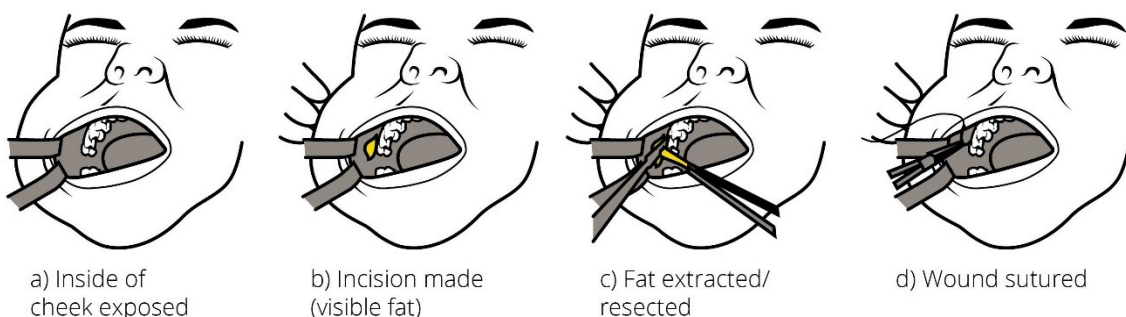
The adipose compartments change throughout life, some are prone to deflation (fat atrophy), whilst others may gain in volume (fat hypertrophy). These volumetric changes are reflected in the contours of the face and will determine how individual regions develop with ageing.

The buccal fat pad is a deep fat compartment that extends from the upper mid-face to the lower face (next to the mouth). Due to the elongated shape, it is prone to a downward volume-shift within the compartment. This may result in fat accumulation and potentially a bulge in the lower cheek, next to the mouth.

A reduction of the buccal fat pad will result in slimmer contours of the front part of the lower face. The treatment highlights the natural definition of the underlying craniofacial architecture, providing a more defined jawline and cheekbones.

Procedure

Buccal fat removal is a simple procedure that can be performed under local anesthesia, IV sedation or general anesthesia. The choice of anesthesia and approach to surgery are made based on patient preference and if other procedures are being done at the same time. The procedure itself takes less than 30 minutes.



Recovery from buccal fat reduction is easy, with minimal impact to your daily life. There may be a small degree of swelling and a minimum soreness in the cheek that is easily treated

with over the counter medications. You will see an improvement of the cheek contour almost immediately after the procedure, but the result will only continue to improve over the following days and weeks as the swelling subsides. After the first few days, there are no dietary or activity restrictions, and all patients return to their normal routine.

As with any surgical procedure there are still risks and complications involved.

Minor Side Effects

Swelling and bruising are a side-effect of any surgical procedure and, depending on your health and lifestyle, can become excessive. Discomfort with some occasional mild pain is also normal, however this can become excessive too. In this instance you should contact your surgeon immediately.

As with any wound you are also at risk of infection. There are many ways, however, that you can prevent this, and you can also monitor it by taking your temperature frequently, as a heightened temperature can indicate infection. Things you can do to prevent infection include altering your diet to avoid any food high in bacteria such as raw/ rare fish and meat, ensuring raw foods like fruit and vegetables are well cleaned, using Listerine several times a day, rinsing the mouth after all meals and avoiding any contact with the wound. Your surgeon should advise you on ways to reduce the risk of infection.

Keeping an eye on your blood pressure is also crucial as an increase in this can cause complications with the incisions and even internal bleeding. This means that for at least the first 3 weeks you'll need to avoid any vigorous activities.

More Serious Risks

A serious risk reported by some patients is a loss of sensation around the cheeks and jaw-line. This can be long-lasting, or even in some cases permanent. Damage to the facial nerves can result in paralysis which is usually temporary but can be permanent.

Asymmetry is also a risk, as is a gaunt appearance. The only solution to both of these problems is more cosmetic surgery, which could be expensive as well as stressful and time-consuming.

Skin-Puckering can also occur along with deep depressions, excess scar tissue and lumps. Hematoma (blood escaped from a blood vessel causing irritation and swelling) and seroma (a Collection of clear fluid) are also known side-effects of the surgery.

As we all grow older we naturally lose the fat around our face as it is burned off. It is for this reason that cheek reduction surgery is rarely recommended to anyone older than their forties. Due to this it is very common that, over time, buccal fat removal patients experience facial changes which can leave them looking gaunt.

PRE-OPERATIVE PREPARATIONS

1. We would recommend you start taking Arnica anti-bruising tablets (Holland & Barratt).

2 tablets three times a day 2 weeks before and after surgery.

2. Avoid aspirin, Ibuprofen, Neurofen and other similar painkillers 1 week before surgery and for **two weeks after surgery**. Paracetamol is the safest painkiller to take, if necessary.

3. Stop Vitamin E and its compounds such as evening primrose oil and fish oils, also garlic and garlic capsules, one week before surgery and for **two weeks after surgery**.

4. Shower with Hibiscrub antiseptic liquid soap (provided), please wash your face in the Hibiscrub also the day before and on the morning of your surgery before coming to have your procedure. **Do not apply moisturiser after showering and please come without make-up**

5. A prescription will be sent out to you prior to your surgery for antibiotics, painkillers and a sedative, please bring this medication with you on the day of your procedure.

POST OP INSTRUCTIONS FOR BUCCAL FAT PAD EXCISION

Instructions

- ! The local anaesthetic will wear off approximately one hour after the procedure.
- ! Paracetamol can be taken as the local anaesthetic wears off. Please avoid Aspirin, Ibruprofen or Neurofen.
- ! Sleep with the head slightly elevated on a few pillows for the first week and avoid bending with the head down.

Follow-up

- ! Usually about a week after the surgery when the wound is checked.

Activities

- ! No restrictions but avoid strenuous activities for the first week

Wound Care

- ! Use Chlorhexidine mouthwash twice daily and after eating for one week post surgery to keep the mouth clean.

If you experience any problems or have any queries following your surgery please call the clinic on 0845 3731818 (Mon-Fri 8am-5pm). Out of office hours, call the Edgbaston Hospital on 0121 456 2000



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