



96% say it's "Worth It"



2-4 weeks of downtime



General anesthesia

## What is a mommy makeover?

A mommy makeover is a term used to describe a group of procedures a woman uses to regain her pre-baby body—and possibly even improve it. Usually done in a single surgical session, it pretty much always involves a [tummy tuck](#), to tighten the belly and repair muscles; a [breast augmentation](#) with or without a [breast lift](#), to raise saggy breasts or replace lost fullness; and [liposuction](#), to help with body contouring. It may also include vaginal rejuvenation or a Brazilian butt lift.

“Many new moms tell us that months after their baby is born, they’re asked when their baby is due. Realizing your body has lost its original shape can be devastating,” says [Dr. Brent Moelleken](#), a plastic surgeon in Beverly Hills and Santa Barbara, California. “No amount of exercise can tighten ripped fascia, join separated muscles, or remove loose skin. But a mommy makeover can help reverse the effects of childbirth, along with feelings of helplessness and frustration about how your body looks.”

### Pros

- A mommy makeover addresses a range of concerns in one surgery, so you have to go under anesthesia only once and endure just a single recovery.
- It can get you back to looking like you did before you got pregnant—and often even better.
- Stretch marks and C-section scars may be removed or improved by the tummy tuck. It can also repair diastasis recti (which occurs when the abdominal muscles separate

at the midline and a pooch peeks out) and hernias as well as reduce back pain and urinary incontinence (according to recent [research](#)).

- RealSelf members who say their mommy makeover was Worth It reported feeling more like themselves after the procedure, with newfound confidence.

## Cons

- You'll need two to four weeks of downtime after a mommy makeover and up to three months to fully recover, since multiple procedures are involved.
- A tummy tuck and liposuction don't protect against future weight gain, which can have a negative effect on your surgical result, says Dr. Moelleken. Good candidates for a mommy makeover are at or close to their ideal body weight and prepared to maintain it by eating a healthy diet and exercising.
- As with any surgery, there's a risk of infection and blood clots. Tummy tucks alone are associated with a higher risk of blood clots than any other cosmetic-surgery procedure.
- There's a limit to how many procedures you should have done at one time, for your safety. It's generally recommended that elective procedures not take more than six to eight hours, and a tummy tuck alone can take three to four hours.
- A mommy makeover can leave significant scars, including a hip-to-hip scar from the tummy tuck. However, the scars should be well hidden under clothing (even in a bathing suit) and fade with time. There are also a number of treatments to help reduce scars.
- You can't schedule this surgery right after you've had a baby, as tempting as that may be. Doctors on RealSelf recommend waiting until you're done having kids—plus at least six months after you stop breastfeeding—so you don't undo your surgical results. This also helps your surgeon accurately gauge what your body looks like at its baseline.
- RealSelf members who say their mommy makeover was Not Worth It had a painful recovery or issues like scarring, uneven liposuction results, or asymmetrical breasts. It's always important to carefully select your surgeon and to have realistic expectations for satisfactory results.

Interested in a mommy makeover? Read on for more details.

Also known as: Mummy Makeover

## **What happens during a mommy makeover?**

Your mommy makeover may be performed in a hospital, an independent surgical facility, or an office-based surgical suite (which should be appropriately accredited). Once you're prepared for surgery, your doctor and medical team will follow the surgical plan you agreed on, which may include these procedures. You'll be under general anesthesia (completely asleep).

- During a breast lift with augmentation, your surgeon lifts and reshapes breast tissue, removing extra skin and often repositioning the nipple so it sits higher on the breast. Breast augmentation is usually done by inserting silicone implants under or over the breast muscles; but if you're looking for a relatively small increase in breast size, your surgeon can do a fat transfer, taking fat from one area of the body (such as the belly or thighs) via liposuction and injecting it into your breasts.
- To perform a tummy tuck, your surgeon pulls back the skin and underlying abdominal tissue, repairs and tightens your ab muscles, and removes excess skin and tissue. They may also do a hernia repair before closing the incision.
- For a liposuction procedure, the surgeon inserts a thin, hollow tube, called a cannula, into small incisions to suction out excess fat.
- A surgeon who specializes in vaginal rejuvenation can tighten the entrance to the vagina, with a perineoplasty, and the vaginal canal and floor, with a vaginoplasty. They can also surgically repair prolapse, a condition where organs push into the vaginal canal. (You may also want to consider nonsurgical laser and radiofrequency energy treatments, such as ThermiVa, MonaLisa Touch, or diVa Vaginal Therapy, to tighten tissues and reduce urinary leakage.)

A Brazilian butt lift transfers fat that's removed via liposuction to the butt, to add volume and create new contours. Just be aware that this has the highest mortality rate of any aesthetic procedure, so it's essential to find a board-certified plastic surgeon who follows the latest safety guidelines.

## **What to expect during mommy makeover recovery**

Just after your surgery, you'll be moved to a recovery area and monitored as you wake up. Gauze or other dressings may be applied to your body and covered with tape or an elastic

bandage, under a surgical binder. You'll have incisions from breast augmentation plus a long abdominal incision from the tummy tuck—unless your surgeon has used a new technique, called a hybrid tummy tuck, with a smaller C-section-type incision, says Dr. Moelleken.

Usually, you'll have tiny drain tubes, placed through small incisions to prevent a buildup of fluids (aka seroma)—though many surgeons don't use drains. Depending on the extent of your mommy makeover, you may be given pain medication through your IV to alleviate discomfort while you rest. You might be able to go home a few hours after surgery, but it's common for your surgeon to request that you stay overnight for additional monitoring.

Recovery time for a mommy makeover depends on what you've had done, but it's safe to assume that you'll need at least two weeks off work—up to six weeks, if your job is highly physical. It's also useful to line up help with child care for the first week after surgery.

You'll be able to engage only in minimal activity during the initial two-week recovery period, with no exercise at all for three weeks and no intense exercise for six weeks.

### **When you'll see results and how long they'll last**

Swelling will start to subside in two to three weeks—though you won't see your full results for up to six months, when you'll be mostly done healing. Your results should last a decade or more, provided you maintain a healthy lifestyle and don't gain a lot of weight. Keep in mind that breast implants aren't considered lifetime devices; they may need to be replaced, typically after 10 years.

***“I feel like a new person! I can wear a two-piece bathing suit now and feel confident and happy and you know what? HOT!!!”***

—JFQ, RealSelf member

## **Alternatives to a mommy makeover**

There isn't another option that will deliver the same kind of results as a mommy makeover, but there are some nonsurgical treatments that can help.

- A nonsurgical body-contouring procedure, like WarmSculpting with SculpSure, can reduce small pockets of fat (though it won't eliminate excess skin). Some doctors recommend a treatment like this in the months prior to a mommy makeover to eliminate the need for liposuction because extensive liposuction during a mommy makeover increases the risk of potential complications.
- Nonsurgical laser and radiofrequency-energy devices like ThermiVa, MonaLisa Touch, diVa Vaginal Therapy, and Votiva can tighten vaginal tissues and reduce urinary leaks.