



# COASTAL PLASTIC SURGERY

## STAGING AND COMBINING BODY CONTOURING PROCEDURES

Most weight loss patients are interested in treating more than one body area. During a consultation with Dr. Reid, a treatment plan will be created that may include multiple procedures, such as an abdominoplasty, a breast lift and a brachioplasty. Once a list of appropriate procedures has been agreed upon, the discussion moves on to whether these procedures should be combined or staged. When two procedures are combined, they are performed during the same operation. When procedures are staged, they are separated by 3 months or more.

There are several factors that Dr. Reid must consider before he makes a final recommendation about whether procedures should be combined and/or staged. These factors include the:

- Patient's age, BMI and general health
- Length of the individual procedures
- Potential for complications
- Anticipated level of discomfort and inconvenience during the recovery
- Patient's level of motivation and tolerance for a difficult recovery
- Availability of support at home during the recovery
- Operating room logistics related to combining procedures
- Technical considerations about how the combined procedures will impact each other
- Need and availability of an appropriate surgical assist

To most patients, combining procedures is an attractive option that maximizes efficiency during the recovery phase. However, safety and surgical outcomes are often improved if procedures are performed separately in a staged fashion.

Some general considerations and recommendations that will apply to most patients include:

- Procedures over 3 hours should be accompanied by an overnight stay
- Two shorter procedures are safer than one long procedure
- Surgery should not take more than 5 hours and preferably less than 4 hours
- For patients with a BMI over 30, operative time should not exceed 4 hours
- A medial thigh lift should not be combined with either a brachioplasty, abdominoplasty or lower body lift
- A face lift should not be combined with other major procedures
- It's generally less expensive to stage multiple operations than it is to combine them