

# Large volume liposuction relevant in obesity management

## Safety depends on proper precautions

### Quick read

**Results of a study** including 25 patients confirm that large volume liposuction can be a relatively safe procedure when performed with attention to several important safety principles.

The improvement achieved in body appearance can promote positive lifestyle changes necessary for further weight loss.

and it can yield predictable results that can be a powerful stimulus for patients to institute and adhere to behavioral modifications.”

Dr. Thomas defined large volume liposuction as a procedure involving removal of more than 5 L of supernatant lipoaspirate. He reports results from a study of 25 cases of large volume liposuction performed over a two-year period. All were done under general anesthesia and with tumescent infiltration using a lidocaine 0.05 percent solution.

The patients ranged in age from 16 to 54 years old, but most were in their 20s or 30s, and the ratio of females to males was 3-to-1. The average volume of lipoaspirate was 7.5 L, and the maximum volume aspirated was 10.5 L. The only serious complication encountered was a case of pulmonary edema due to fluid overload. However, it resolved with timely and appropriate medical management.

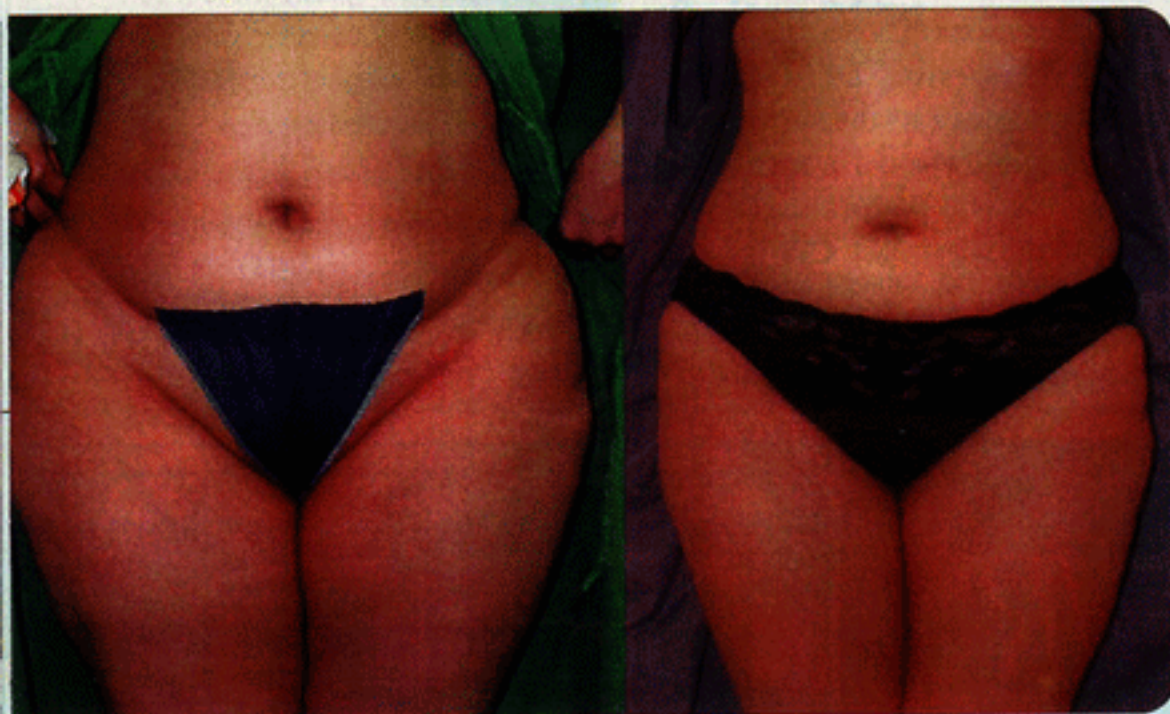
“This patient received 1 unit of albumin for every 4 L of lipoaspirate, but analysis of our laboratory monitoring results from patients undergoing large volume liposuction showed that while changes in hemoglobin and hematocrit were predictable based on volume of lipoaspirate, the serum protein change was not. It is unclear whether this patient developed pulmonary edema as a result of too-rapid fluid administration, or if the albumin played a role in creating a hyperosmolar solution. However, most healthy patients are able to recover serum protein levels fairly quickly without receiving albumin, and we are no longer administering it,” Dr. Thomas says.

The only other complication encountered was a suture line dehiscence in a 16-year-old male who had 7 L of fat aspirated during a combined liposuction and tummy tuck procedure. The wound healed secondarily without problems.

### Safety principles

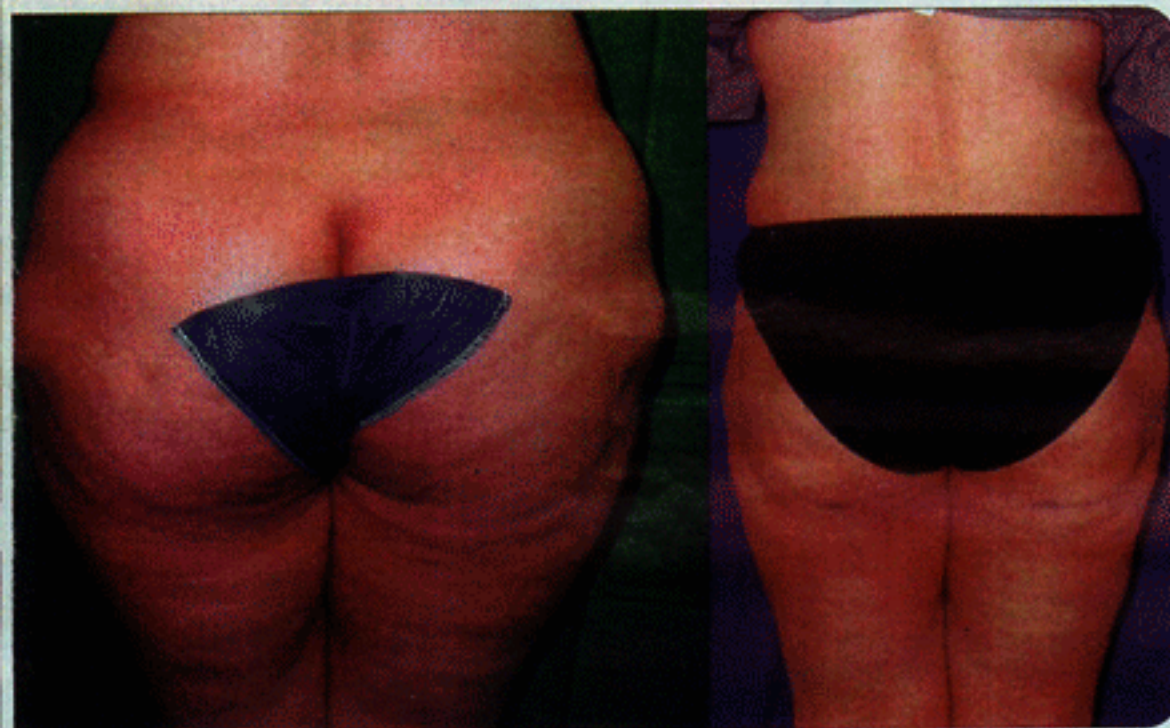
Proper patient selection is the first issue to consider for optimizing the risk/benefit profile of large volume liposuction. The procedure is not applicable to persons who are morbidly obese, but may be performed in

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Above and below: A 25-year-old woman underwent liposuction, with 10.5 liters of fat aspirated. The patient is pictured before (left) and four weeks post-procedure.

Photos: Mohan Thomas, M.D., D.D.S.



Before and after: A 27-year-old male with severe exogenous obesity underwent tummy tuck and liposuction of the upper back.

Photos: Mohan Thomas, M.D., D.D.S.

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**Orlando, Fla.** — When carried out with careful precautions to mitigate potential risks, large volume liposuction can be a safe and important option for achieving contour correction in obese patients and motivating them toward positive lifestyle changes, according to Mohan Thomas, M.D., D.D.S., speaking at the 24<sup>th</sup> annual scientific meeting of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery.

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The procedure is not applicable to persons who are morbidly obese.

“With obesity on the rise and bariatric surgery associated with potential significant morbidity, alternative methods for promoting weight loss have an important role,” explains Dr. Thomas, who is medical director, the Cosmetic Surgery Institute, Mumbai, India. “Large volume liposuction is not a substitute for dieting and exercise and is not appropriate for all overweight individuals. However, performed under the proper conditions, its safety profile is acceptable