



Washington Township Medical Foundation

Part of Washington Hospital Healthcare System

Washington Women's Health

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Diplomates of the American Board
of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Labia Reduction (Labiaplasty)

Some women develop enlarged or asymmetrical labia minora (the inner vaginal lips) during puberty or with aging. Others develop this from hormones, childbirth, or perhaps chronic irritation. The appearance of the labia varies greatly from one woman to another and most shapes and sizes are normal variations. Sometimes the size or asymmetry of the labia may cause a woman to experience discomfort during certain activities like exercise, sex, or wearing tight fitting clothing. Labiaplasty is a simple minor procedure to decrease the size of the labia. The goal is to alleviate discomfort associated with labial size.

When is the best time to have a Labiaplasty performed?

It is recommended that a woman wait until she has completed puberty before undergoing a labia reduction. However, she does not have to wait until after completing childbearing to be a candidate for a labiaplasty.

How is labia reduction performed and is a laser necessary?

As you consider any operation, your concern should focus on a surgeon's skills. No physician has greater experience with female genitalia than gynecologists. At Women's Health Specialists we are all board certified gynecologic surgeons.

Let's also clarify a misconception. Many surgeons try to enhance their marketing to the public by implying that using a laser is the best method. A laser is simply a tool that cuts skin, no better or worse than a scalpel or fine scissors. The cosmetic results and recovery are similar with all methods.

Most importantly, the specific technique and incisions will be customized to excise excess tissue and reconstruct your labia minora. Preferences vary and your surgeon will work with you to determine the optimal degree of correction.

How long does a Labiaplasty take to perform?

It generally depends on the extent of the procedure, but usually takes about one hour and does not require a hospital stay. A variety of anesthesia choices are available.



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What is recovery like?

As with any type of surgery, there is a period of time needed for the body to heal. After surgery, any pain or discomfort you may experience can usually be controlled through medication. Sitz baths or soaking in warm water, a few times each day can be quite soothing. For the first week, mild soreness and swelling is common and consequently activities are limited. We do not recommend vigorous exercise for about 2 weeks or until it can be comfortably performed. Likewise, you should abstain from sexual intercourse (or any type of vaginal penetration) for 6 weeks.

How soon can I return to work?

It depends greatly on the procedure and the nature of your work, but on average most patients return to work within 7 days. If complications arise, additional time away from work may be required.

Will there be scars?

Your doctor will make every effort to keep incisions as minimal as possible. In most cases the scars are virtually undetectable after complete healing with patients in follow-up being extremely pleased with the results. The final results can usually be appreciated a few months after surgery.





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What are the potential risks and complications?

As with any operation there are risks such as bleeding, bruising, infection, and scarring. These events occur on occasion and usually resolve. Rarely pain with sex persists. These will be discussed during your consultation.

Will insurance cover the cost of the procedure?

Labiaplasty is considered cosmetic surgery and health insurance plans don't cover it. There is usually a physician's fee, a facility fee and an anesthesia fee. The exact amounts will vary depending on the specifics of your surgery and the type of anesthesia necessary. Our office will give you more detailed information regarding costs as you plan for your surgery.