

Title:

Surgical management of lymphoedema – 5 years experience of liposuction.

Abstract:Introduction:

Following an initial visit to Malmo, a surgical service for lymphoedema has been developed in Dundee, Scotland.

Methods:

The clinical indications, liposuction technique and post-operative care protocols have previously been well described by Dr Brorson.

Results:

In the last 5 years, 20 patients have undergone liposuction for chronic lymphoedema (12 arms, 8 legs).

The mean preoperative arm volume difference was 1391 (637-2428) mls, with a mean of 1712 (925-2600) mls of fat being removed. The mean preoperative leg volume difference was 4766 (2699-9366) mls, with a mean of 4612 (2700 – 9250) mls of fat aspirated.

The upper limb post-liposuction mean percentage reductions were 84% at 2 weeks (n=12), 86% at 1 month (n=12), 92% at 6 months (n=12), 100% at 1 year (n=12), 111% at 2 years (8), 112% at 3 years (4) and 116% at 4 years (n=3). The lower limb percentage reductions were 38% at 2 weeks (n=8), 58% at 1 month (n=8), 63% at 3 months (n=8), 71% at 6 months (n=7), 72% at 1 year (n=6). All patients have been delighted with the results of treatment, although 4 have not been entirely compliant. There has been no skin loss, but one patient suffered a foot drop, which recovered. Hospital Anxiety and Depression scores have reduced significantly from 8.76 to 4.23 (anxiety) and 5.94 to 1.38 (depression). Visual analogue scores have improved from 65.12 to 82.46.

Conclusion:

Our results are comparable to Brorson's and we will continue to offer this treatment in Scotland.