

Dena's Liposuction Journal



I've been fighting with myself about my legs for years. I grew up showing horses and always had toned and muscular legs. When I stopped riding about 5 years ago, my legs just seemed to fall apart. I tried different methods to achieve the same results, but nothing seemed to work. Liposuction was always in the back of my head, but I was so convinced I could achieve the results I wanted through diet and exercise.

I remember the exact day I decided to do lipo. I had just left work and was heading to Marquette for a 10-day vacation. On the long drive, I was thinking about how nice it was going to be relaxing on the beach of Lake Superior, but the thought of showing my legs in a swimsuit brought heaviness to me. Maybe many people feel this way, but being in a bikini had never been an issue for me. Right then and there I called Kim, who is Dr. Lytle's patient representative to have her hold a surgery date for me.

When I came back from vacation, I talked to Dr. Lytle to see if lipo was an option for me. After an examination, he thought I could achieve the results I wanted by doing some sculpting to the medial and lateral thighs with liposuction.

It took me a few days to decide, but once the decision was made, I felt confident that I made the right choice. Surgery was scheduled for December 20, 2013. That was a good time for me since I could take time off during the week of Christmas to recover from the surgery.

November 2013: Current weight – 134 | size dress – 4 | jean size – 28

December 6, 2013: I've increased my water intake and started using Arnica gel twice a day on my legs. Arnica is homeopathic formula used to speed up the recovery from bruising and swelling.

December 13, 2013: Current weight – 131. I am still using Arnica gel twice a day, taking sublingual Arnica and drinking almost a gallon of water a day.

December 20, 2013: SURGERY DAY!

Current weight – 127.5. My nurses were Cindy, Angel and Cec. Donna Smith did my anesthesia. Dr. Lytle marked me before surgery with a purple marker. He warned me that I would be seeing a lot of purple and explained that this was where he would be sculpting my body and that there may be about 1 liter of fat removed. There indeed were a lot of markings, but I had complete trust in Dr. Lytle. He is an amazing surgeon with artistic skills.



With Donna, the nurse anesthetist.



Before surgery.



Just waking up after surgery.



With my best friend Gina.

Next step, IV for anesthesia. Donna came in and explained everything to me and started my IV. Now off to see nurse Cindy for my Iodine bath. I crawl up on the table and that is the last thing I remember...

Wakey wakey... The first smiling face I saw was nurse Cec and then my best friend Gina. Apparently I was freezing, because I was wrapped up like a mummy. Cindy and Angel joined our little party and informed me that he removed 3.5 liters of fat, which equaled about 6 pounds. This amount was shocking to everyone, because no one really thought I had that much fat. Apparently my muscular shaped legs could hide it better than most.

Dr. Lytle warned me that since he did a lot of work on me, I needed to stay ahead of the pain. I was instructed to take my pain meds every 4 hours. Time to get dressed and go home (thanks Gina and Cec for your help). While being discharged, I noticed that I had some mild burning pain in my medial thighs. In my head, I was thinking, yep Lytle was right! At 5 pm I was heading home. All I could think about was how hungry and thirsty I was. I hadn't eaten or had any water since the day before. Once I arrived at home, I ate some peanut butter on toast and drank water. My legs were up and elevated, the compression garment was on. I took my first dose of pain meds at 9:30 pm.

December 21, 2013 – Day 1 post op: I woke up at 8 am and had a small breakfast with water. I was feeling stiff, but it was very manageable. I was still in the compression garment and only removed it long enough to apply Arnica and take photos. I took pain meds at 10:15 am, 6:30 pm and 10:00 pm. No activity today – I just rested with my legs elevated. Doctor's orders!

December 22, 2013 – Day 2 post op: I am sleeping well with my legs elevated and woke up feeling pretty good. The only pain I felt was when I got up or sat down. Walking actually felt good. Everything is tightening from swelling and the walking seems to stretch it. As of today the swelling seems to be pooling in the groin and lateral legs by my knees. Time for a shower and then Arnica, then back on the couch with my legs up. I switched to Motrin and Tylenol today instead of the prescription pain meds. I still have inflammation, but hardly any pain. I took these at 11:00 am and 5:00 pm. I am sleeping a lot, napping on and off throughout the day to let my body rest and recover. I keep the compression on 24/7 and my legs elevated as much as possible. I am still applying Arnica twice a day, taking the sublingual Arnica and drinking water.



With nurse Angel.



Day 5 post op.



With nurses Cec and Cindy.

December 23, 2013 – Day 3 post op: It is easier to get up and down today. I have been doing some lymphatic drainage to my legs. It's very soothing. The bruising is still not too bad, but I felt that there was a lot of fullness on my lateral thighs, so I contacted Dr. Lytle. He had me take pictures and send them to him. His concern was the development of seromas, which are pockets of fluid. He came over to see me and drained both legs – 100 cc's drained from each lateral thigh. No pain medication at all today. I've had no pain, I just feel a little stiff.

December 24, 2013 – Day 4 post op: I have more swelling today and my legs are feeling tight and achy. There is swelling down to my ankles. I am still very tired, and I can't seem to stay awake for longer than an hour at a time. I am listening to my body and letting it heal. I am still drinking lots water and keeping my legs elevated. Due to inflammation I took Motrin at 4:30 pm.

December 25, 2013 – Day 5 post op: It's Christmas day, so I've been up more than usual today. My legs more swollen today since I've been on my feet, but there is no pain and I have taken no meds. I took my steri strips off today.

December 29, 2013 – Day 9 post op: Dr. Lytle came to my house today to drain my seromas. He took off 80cc from my left leg and 30cc from my right.

December 30, 2013 – Day 10 post op: I'm back to work today. I am feeling great, just moving very slow due to the swelling around my knees. I can't really flex at the knee to walk normal. The seromas are still present and they were drained again today - 70cc off the left leg and 50cc off the right. I definitely struggled with fatigue today. I'm used to being home and napping on and off throughout the day. I drank extra water today to help with that.

January 2, 2014 – Day 13 post op: My bruising is almost gone and the swelling around knees is going down, which makes it much easier to walk. I feel like my energy is getting close to normal. The seromas were drained once again today – 50cc on the left and 20cc on the right.

January 3, 2014 – Day 14 post op: The bruising is gone and I have increased range of motion. I slept very poorly last night. My legs are really burning right now from the nerves regenerating.



With Dr. Lytle - My amazing surgeon!

January 10, 2014 – 3 weeks out! The edema is almost gone around my knees and I am walking almost 100% normal. I am holding on to some edema in my medial thighs, but over all I feel amazing! My only complaint is that I'm tired of feeling tired. I will be glad when my energy comes back. I feel like my legs are tight when I stand up after sitting for a while, but once I'm up, they seem to be fine. I'm still wearing the compression 24/7 and I actually like it. It feels good.

January 15, 2014 – I got back to the gym today with no restrictions (I'm still wearing my compression). I walked 5 miles on the treadmill and my legs were feeling great until the end. The next day they were a little more swollen and felt heavy, but I expected this. Drinking a little extra water and elevating my legs helped.



After week 10 post op.

March 2014 – Now I am 10 weeks out. I'm feeling amazing and elated over my new legs. This whole adventure was easier than I expected. I went from a size 28 jeans down to a size 25 and my dress size is now a 2. My current weight is 118 pounds. All of my incision scars are fading and flat. There is still some numbness, but I am getting more feeling back every day. I believe that we all deserve to feel confident with our bodies. If it takes a little tweaking by one of our amazing surgeons, then so be it!

I would like to thank Cindy, Angel and Cec for taking great care of me. Thank you to my best friend Gina for supporting me during this journey and helping me share my story. And most of all, thank you Dr. Lytle for being an INCREDIBLE surgeon. You have made all of this possible. Your kindness, knowledge, and friendship have meant the world to me!



After week 10 post op.

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