

Women's Health

Bat Wings and Dingle Dang

By Jeffrey S. Poulter, M.D., FACS

Bat Wings and Dingle Dang are not the scientific names, but we all know what we are talking about...that extra skin and fat that hangs off your arm making it impossible to wear a short sleeved or sleeveless blouse.

This is an area that body-contouring plastic surgeons treat with great care. The area of your arm between your elbow and the shoulder is one of great concern to many patients. For some it is where their genetic fat lives. Genetic fat lives in the one or two areas of the body that, no matter how thin you get, just won't go away. If you have been unsuccessful at reducing this area, body contouring plastic surgeons can offer several treatment options.

Liposuction Solution

If you have good skin with few stretch marks and a moderate amount of excess fat, liposuction may offer you the best result with minimal scarring. With slightly more soft tissue, staging several liposuction treatments may be able to let the skin contract down around the new internal contour, thus minimizing the chance the skin will wrinkle if too much is removed all at once.

Brachioplasty Solution

There are some patients following massive weight loss who have minimal fat but an abundance of droopy skin that just hangs from the upper arm. These patients require surgery to remove, reshape and re-drape the arm, tightening the skin envelope. Although the incision can be difficult to heal well, Dr Ted Lockwood, the father of body contouring, said while I assisted him during surgery, "If you give the patient the contour they are asking for, the scar will not be an issue."

Combined Liposuction and Surgery

There are still others who require staged treatments beginning with liposuction to decompress the arm, followed by surgical excision of the newly created droopy skin. This will reduce the fullness in the patient that is unable to lose weight in this isolated area and has too much to be able to suction away.



Make sure you understand how long and where the incision will be before your say yes, and ask to see examples of several patients your plastic surgeon has operated on. To get an idea of how your contour and incision may look.

In this era everyone wants to look as good as they feel and no one wants their arms to continue to wave at Aunt Alice for several seconds after their hand has stopped. Liposuction and Brachioplasty or arm lift can provide a significant improvement in your self esteem allowing you to wear the clothes you want to during the spring and summer, not the hot, long sleeved cover-up throughout the year.

Dr. Jeffrey Poulter is a board-certified plastic surgeon with over 18 years of experience, with offices in Bloomington and Peoria. For more information you may contact Dr. Jeffrey Poulter at (309) 663-1222 in Bloomington or (309) 692-6869 in Peoria— or call toll-free (888) 841-4108. E-mail your questions to info@drpoulter.com. Visit www.drpoulter.com for additional information, before and after photos and videos of various procedures, in the privacy of your own home.