



Is It Time for a Tummy Tuck?

I know it won't solve all my lipodystrophy challenges, but I'm feeling desperate to improve my body. Do you relate?

December 12, 2017 By [Glenna McCarthy](#)

When something feels very wrong with my body, I tend to play the blame game. Is it caused by age? Is it side effects from medications that could have been avoided? Am I at fault since I can't seem to stick to diets? Is my body breaking down? And the biggest question I ask myself: Can the "problem" be changed.

It has become painfully clear to me that to keep the will to thrive and survive you need to feel a strong sense of self and to understand what is going on with your body. But what does that entail? This can be hard to figure out because our looks mean a whole lot to us and because the cosmetics and diet industries are built around our looks and how we think of our outer beauty. To complicate the matters, it's challenging to be objective about our own appearance.

At this point, I struggle with a desire to fix my inner self with a nip and a tuck. I am exhausted from trying to lose weight and then not getting any results. You can read my blog entry about taking Egrifta and trying CoolSculpt [here](#). Basically, I found an affordable CoolSculpting location but after a few sessions and way too many diet attempts I am finally saying, "Fuck this, I need help." I feel an uncomfortable dense fat congestion in my core, and it even impedes movement and makes exercising more difficult. As a result, I have elected to get a tummy tuck, although I know does not fix the fat that's around the organs in the belly, a type of fat called deep visceral fat. I have discussed this issue with many long-term survivors, and insurance does not pay for liposuction (If I am wrong please correct me in your comments).

My attempts at CoolSculpting

So how did I get to this point? Because of lack of knowledge, I took the early HIV med AZT, which is associated with lipodystrophy (fat redistribution). I definitely had my share of different regimens over the past 27 years, but even some of the newer medications that do not contain AZT presently still have the fat redistribution side-effect potential. In the early days of the epidemic, we had to deal with wasting syndrome, and then there were cases of buffalo hump (a fat deposit on the back of your neck) and excess fat in the core of the body. I have had doctors tell me that side effects are the lesser of two evils, but it is still a hard pill to swallow. Yes, I want to live, but I don't want to feel uncomfortable to an extreme if I can help it.

I am presently taking Egrifta, which is a daily injection to combat visceral fat. The success is still hard to determine because when I look in the mirror I am focusing on subcutaneous fat because that is what is visible to others. But I have had some relief from Egrifta, for example no longer feeling like I had to rip off my bra and clothes because of feeling suffocated with constriction.

This is not an easy topic to discuss, so I welcome any comment and knowledge. I am an impulsive person, and I will try anything to improve my body and mind. Yoga, boxing and basketball have been my pastimes. What worries me now is that I can't do many of the things that were not only good for my body like basketball but also good for my anxiety issues (PTSD); they provided a great release of stress. (I still have a punching bag in my apartment, but I am also going through another health scare and the only guess I have is neuropathy, but that issue, like so many things, is yet to be confirmed.)

Aging is a personal process. We all have our own experiences, but I am sure one thing we can all

agree upon is that the discomfort and aches and pains of aging are not improved when there's an elephant in the room (no pun intended)—which is an unhealthy accumulation of visceral and subcutaneous fat in your mid-section.

Once again, I will say that liposuction and tummy tucks are not the cure to lipodystrophy, but at this point I need anything to lighten the load.

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<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/time-tummy-tuck-lipodystrophy-hiv>