

Are You Ready For Spring?



By Don J. Fontana, MD, PA

As the days of winter fade, spring and summer approach with the reality that the past five months of inactivity and holiday over-indulgence have played havoc with your figure. An aggressive but thoughtful plan of exercise and dieting is the first step to reverse the excess poundage that many accumulate during the winter months. Despite these sacrifices, certain areas of the body simply cannot be improved without the help of your plastic surgeon.

This article will discuss liposuction, spider vein treatment and laser hair reduction. In next month's article Thermage, breast augmentation, and abdominoplasty, and skin care will be addressed.

Liposuction

While exercise burns calories by reducing the size of the fat cells, there are

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always pesky areas of the body that are difficult to reduce in size. Unfortunately there is no dieting or exercise technique that can result in a localized fat reduction.

In other words, one cannot differentially reduce fat, for example, in the "love handles" or "saddle bag" areas. Liposuction of these troublesome areas and many other areas of localized fat may be the answer for many patients.

This procedure is performed in an accredited outpatient surgery center under local anesthesia with sedation or under general anesthesia. Recovery is quick, pain is minimal and patients often return to work within a few days.

Spider Veins

Spider veins of the legs are an affliction common to all women. Depending upon your family history, number of pregnancies, age, and body weight, they can be nothing more than a nuisance or a reason not to wear shorts and a bathing suit. Depending on the

size and distribution of the spider veins, treatment is either by injection or laser.

The larger spider veins are easily treated by injection. Smaller veins can only be treated with a vascular laser. Patients must understand that the treatment of spider veins does not prevent new ones from developing over time.

Treatment results vary according to the age of the patient, the number and location of veins. For many woman, treatment can be a very gratifying experience.

Hair Laser

Another area that can be improved only by laser technology is hair reduction. With the bathing suit season coming, the areas that laser hair reduction may be considered are the lower legs, underarms and bikini area. The treatment involves 3-4 treatments over a period of 3-4 months. Treatment is best done before the skin is tanned.

One can anticipate 80-90% reduction in the amount of hair after completion of the treatment. Patients with dark hair and light skin have the most lasting results.

Cost varies according to the size of the area being treated. It is not painless, but topical creams applied to the treatment area ensure a reasonable comfort level.

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