

SCALPEL NEWS

By Joan Kron

Fat Melting

A unique ultrasound device has been found to reduce the waist, hips, and thighs in a one- to two-hour nonsurgical treatment. The ultrasound waves break up underlying fat cells and liquefy the fat, which is partly converted to energy and partly redistributed or excreted. Ultra-Shape, which could cost \$1,000 to \$5,000 per session depending on the body area, is expected to be approved in Europe by this summer, and in the United States by early 2006. Describing it as "noninvasive and safe," Jacques Otto, a London doctor who took part in a trial, believes that it will "revolutionize the practice of body sculpture" by providing an alternative to liposuction and possibly also treating cellulite.

43%

of 209 people gained weight (usually five to ten pounds) after undergoing liposuction.

—University of Texas survey of patients between 1996 and 2003

Healing Peeling

A new type of microdermabrasion is designed to treat skin problems while it exfoliates. As a spinning diamond burr buffs the skin, one of three solutions is delivered: cleanser for cystic acne, hydrating solution for wrinkles, or hydroquinone for discoloration. (Four to six weekly sessions are standard.) Biopsies show that the liquids penetrate the skin after abrasion. The treatment, SilkPeel, causes slight redness for about half an hour, with none of the residual "grittiness" of traditional microdermabrasion, says Mary Lupo, a dermatologist in New Orleans.

Firmer, Tighter Skin

Pople who wish to tighten loose skin on the face, neck, abdomen, or arms may benefit from light-based technology. The FDA-approved Titan laser, which emits infrared, nonablative light, is a less costly and less painful alternative to another nonsurgical option, Thermage, a radio-frequency device that has caused some

depressions in the skin and loss of underlying fat padding. During the Titan treatment, light pulses on the skin for 10 to 60 minutes. Though it cannot firm the face as dramatically as a face-lift, says Barry DiBernardo, a plastic surgeon in Montclair, New Jersey, it can lift and tighten skin around the jawline and neck with one to five sessions, a month apart.