

The Truth About Slimming

Can you really wrap, laser or lipo your way to a thinner you?

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Slimming can soften the skin, detoxify the body, and temporarily remove excess water weight.

We can't wait to lose. "Americans really like instant results," Israeli-born spa owner Dorit Baxter explained. And it's true. We all want to lose weight, and the faster the better. From colonics, to vibrating weight belts, to grapefruit diets, we yearn for that easy weight loss cure. And now it might be as easy as losing a few inches in the same place you get your manicure. Many spas boast treatments that help one to lose inches, but do they really work?

We tell people it's temporary and they're losing water and not fat

Wrap Your Way to a Thinner You?

Body wraps are known to tighten and soften the skin, detoxify the body, and get rid of water weight. Dorit Baxter Day Spa has its own take with the "Mummy Slimmer Body Wrap." It's all the fun of a regular body wrap, but while wrapped up a personal trainer guides you

through an exercise workout. "I saw it in a spa in Europe in the south of France and I improved on it," Baxter explained. "I added ten minute exercises to increase the metabolism."

While the results vary, the long-term effects depend on one's lifestyle. "It matters what you eat after. Anything that has alcohol, white flour, or sodium will bring the results back to where we started. After the treatment we give them a list of do's and don'ts. We tell people it's temporary and they're losing water and not fat," Baxter said. "You look better because it contracts the tissue in the body."

Going Under the Laser

If wraps don't do the trick, maybe you'd rather go right to the cellulite. Ergonique, a spa and medical facility in California, has several treatments that use mesotherapy, a non-surgical procedure that aims to diminish cellulite and excess weight by administering injections to the problem areas. One of their treatments, Dermawave, uses mesotherapy without needles. "Dermawave uses a laser to open up the blood vessels near the surface of the skin," Kristin Archibald, a massage therapist at Ergonique, said. "Then they use electrical stimulation, kind of like an ultrasound, which burns fat."

But the treatment isn't for just anyone. "In order to do it you have to be on a really healthy diet, so you have to be willing to change your lifestyle for the best results," Archibald explained.

Another laser procedure works to tighten your skin for best results. "It's a subdermal massage that either uses infrared or magenta light with the massage in addition to suction. It helps to heal the tissue under the skin," Archibald said.

While laser therapies seem to offer more long-lasting results, they need to be done regularly. "If consistently used, they actually reduce inches, but if the treatments are stopped, the inches return," dermatologist Dr. Judith Hellman explained.

The Future of Weight Loss

While non-invasive procedures offer short-term results, the technology for more serious treatments continues to progress. Ergonique also offers a "water-assisted liposuction." Recovery time for the process is apparently faster because instead of the patient taking anesthesia, it's sprayed over the area that will be affected. "It still takes about four to six weeks to recover, but they say the next day you can go out for lunch with your girlfriends," Archibald said.

The Verdict

Alas, it seems without a little nip and tuck, the only way to a thinner you is the old-fashioned way. "Permanent weight loss can result from exercising and eating the right foods," Hellman said. "All other methods are short-term 'feel good' boosters, which may be useful as inspiration for further loss, but not enough as a stand-alone method." Guess we'll just have to keep waiting for that magic cure.

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