

THE VERDICT ON FAT-FREEZING

By Dr Mike Shenouda

Is it sci-fi fantasy or can you really just freeze your way to the body you always wanted? Imagine a quick, non-invasive procedure that could reduce stubborn areas of fat. It's virtually painless, touted as safe, and has zero downtime. Sound too good to be true?



Meet cryolipolysis. Also known as fat freezing. The fat in the area the patient wants to decrease is painlessly sucked into a wand-like, non-invasive device which then breaks down the fat cells with cold temperatures. The FDA approved procedure takes approximately one hour with many clients napping, working away on their laptop or ipad, reading or using their phone throughout the duration of the treatment. In the weeks after the treatment, your body naturally eliminates the frozen, dead fat cells (apoptosis) through your liver. People start to see results just a few weeks later. Three months later the area (which had been frozen for the hour or so long treatment) should have shrunk by 20-40 percent.

As a Doctor of Medical Aesthetics for twenty years, the science behind fat freezing stacked up to me. I knew that fat cells died from freezing a significant time before skin and other cells were affected, therefore the technology made sense. Once I saw the research results and the approval by Food and Drug Association government agency, I knew it was a game changer in the body sculpting arena.

COMPARISON TO LIPOSUCTION

I offer both liposuction and fat freezing procedures. My decision for a substantial investment in cryolipolysis is based on practical hands-on managing and following up on my patients treated by all other modalities

Fat freezing is also only a fraction of the price of liposuction, starting at \$400 per area from reputable providers - while liposuction costs several thousand.

I find that the results of fat freezing and liposuction are very similar. Both procedures are used to permanently remove excess fat from specific body parts such as the belly, back, thighs, arms and chin, although neither is intended for weight loss.

Fat freezing is a nonsurgical procedure, meaning there is no cutting, stitching, anesthetising, or recovery time necessary. Liposuction, on the other hand, is an invasive surgical procedure that involves cutting, stitching, and anesthetising.

However, Liposuction patients normally only require one treatment. While many fat freezing clients are satisfied with one session, some clients choose to undertake a few sessions spread out over several weeks to achieve their desired results. One of the biggest advantages of fat freezing over liposuction is that, unlike liposuction, fat freezing goes beyond fat removal to tighten the skin and add firmness to the treatment areas.



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about 200 cases of PAH have been reported. PAH is treated by subsequent fat freezing procedures, although you may require laser treatment or liposuction if symptoms persists. Fortunately, PAH is highly treatable, and most patients are extremely pleased with their end results.

Fat freezing risks are much higher if you opt to use DIY methods such as store-bought applicators. Doctors, dermatologists, and other fat freezing experts use professional-grade applicators. My decision to substantially invest in the fat freezing machine technology I did at Géniale, my beauty centre, was based on my knowledge and experience when comparing it with other modalities on the market for body sculpting. I followed up on my patients after using other technology for body sculpting. The machine I purchased had proved to be the most effective and efficient with the greatest customer satisfaction.

The expert also needs to be well trained to avoid the common side effects.

For instance, a professional fat freezing doctor will always use a well-lubricated gel pad with their applicator to reduce (frozen) burn risk. The well-trained professionals will also understand body contouring and will ensure the applicator is placed on correctly to avoid unwanted changes in body contour.

FINAL VERDICT: THE TRUTH ABOUT FAT FREEZING?

Fat freezing remains one of the safest and most effective fat removal procedures and the subsequent skin tightening is a serious bonus. It has no reported debilitating effects and none that are even remotely life-threatening. To minimise any of these risks, avoid DIY procedures with store-bought products. It's imperative to choose a well trained expert to administer your fat freezing procedure. Consult an expert who will assess whether you qualify as a fat freezing candidate.

Dr Shenouda obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Medicine and Surgery in 1986 and pursued further training at London's Hammersmith Hospital, Bond University and the Australasian College of Aesthetic Medicine. With over 19 years expert experience in skin cancer medicine and surgery, Dr Shenouda is passionate about delivering a holistic approach to skin cancer treatment, medical aesthetics and wellness to achieve long-term healing and wellness and to create a positive self-image through superior aesthetic results. He is the founder of Géniale, Medical Aesthetics and Skin

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FAT FREEZING IS A NONSURGICAL PROCEDURE, MEANING THERE IS NO CUTTING, STITCHING, ANESTHETISING, OR RECOVERY TIME NECESSARY.

THE RISKS AND SIDE EFFECTS OF FAT FREEZING

Fat freezing risks are rare and short-lived. The most concerning of the risks is PAH.

Paradoxical adipose hypertrophy (PAH) is the unintended stimulation of tissue growth, following a treatment. Paradoxical tissue growth is a phenomenon observed occasionally with device-based therapies. For example, paradoxical hypertrichosis can occur after laser treatment for hair removal.) The phenomenon seems to be more common in male patients undergoing Cryolipolysis. When PAH presents after fat freezing, the treated area actually enlarges instead of decreasing.

However, PAH has a recorded incidence rate of less than 0.0051%. Which means that out of the 4 million procedures, only