

Set the laser on “slim,” Mr. Spock

Behold, we are about to enter the era of the Fat Zapper.

Almost inevitably, that’s the nickname that will be applied to the Smartlipo and other certain-to-come versions of the lipolysis laser, a device has been in use in Europe for some years already, and which is employed to perform liposuction procedures not through customary surgery, but by liquefying the fat.

The way it works, in a nutshell, is by inserting a paperclip-thin laser fiber probe into a very tiny incision and using it to burst fat cells, melting the fat, which is then either absorbed by the body or syringed out, depending on the volume of fat involved.

This procedure is going to become as common as mudbaths, for several reasons. First, it is much less invasive than standard liposuction, which involves an incision large enough to handle the removal of solid globs of fat, and several ensuing weeks of pain, residual bruises, and physical recovery. The laser procedure leaves the patient virtually pain- and bruise-free, with recovery time a matter of days.

The second reason may be even more significant:

Fat Zapping has immediate and specific “body sculpting” effects. Since the heat involved with fat melting also stimulates collagen production, the skin tightens as the fat is removed, minimizing post-lipo sags and folds.

The third reason is simple clinical numbers: more than 400,000 conventional liposuctions were performed last year, making it the most common cosmetic surgical procedure in America.



But probably not for long. Mind you, lipolysis laser technology is just now hitting the states. Smartlipo was only approved by the FDA in November, and at least one competing brand is in another company's pipeline.

The smart money says liposuction will be eclipsed by a new #1 procedure by 2008.

The Fat Zapper.

(By Robert S. Wieder for CalorieLab Calorie Counter News)