

# Goodbye to Love (Handles)

Will a new non-invasive procedure freeze my fat away?

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**O**RLANDO | I'VE HAD LOVE HANDLES FOR AS LONG as I can remember. Those two unsightly, un-masculine side-saddlebags of fat have plagued me since adolescence, and kept me in baggy bathing suits for decades.

Even at my *Butterfield 8* weight, when I dropped below 180 for a few minutes just before Beach Ball back in 1999, I had love handles. It didn't stop me from braving a tight bathing suit, and the pictures still make me cringe. Why didn't my so-called friends say something!

Now that I'm 56 and battling to stay under 200, my love handles feel as permanent as my feet. So when Dr. Dimitri Palceski at Reflections Dermatology offered to let me test-run his non-invasive Cool Sculpting targeted fat reduction treatment, I was enthusiastic. Could this be the help—and motivation—needed to get me into tight-fitting t-shirts again?

## POPSICLE PROCEDURE

I know people who've undergone liposuction, a painful and expensive surgical procedure in which fat cells are sucked out of the body. Many gained weight afterward, and the fat reappeared in places even less appealing than the midsection.

Cool Sculpting is something entirely different, and like many medical innovations its discovery was entirely serendipitous. Physicians at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School noticed that sick children who eat lots of popsicles lose weight in their cheekbones. Subsequent testing confirmed that fat cells freeze at a slightly higher temperature than surrounding cells, including skin cells.

The doctors created a machine that uses a vacuum applicator to gently draw a targeted area between two cooling pads. After treatment, the cooled fat cells solidify (like refrigerated butter), then slowly atrophy until they are metabolized and eliminated naturally.

After a single treatment, fat layers are reduced by as much as 25% and the targeted area—love handles, lower abdomen, lower back—shrinks noticeably. The process is gradual, with complete results taking up to 12 weeks. But there is no surgery, no anesthesia, no recovery period.

"The best candidates are those who aren't significantly overweight, but have some localized areas of fat that they'd like to get rid of in their abdomen, hips or thighs," says Dr. Jeffrey Dover, an advisor to the company that created Cool Sculpting.

I was told that there would be two 60-minute treatments, one for each love handle, and that afterward I could return to work and even exercise immediately. With that in mind, I scheduled my appointment at Reflections Dermatology for the week before Christmas

## FROZEN FAT

At Dr. Palceski's spacious, high-tech offices in Baldwin Park I was escorted to a small room furnished with a small couch and flat screen television. The futuristic vacuum robot in the middle of the room turned out to be the Zeltiq Cool Sculpting device.

I changed into loose-fitting workout shorts before nurse practitioner Andrea Bellow sized me up and we talked about desired results—"Shrink the love handles!" Then

she marked an area the size of a submarine sandwich on either side of my stomach. We took pictures, and then she walked me through the procedure.

Most important was finding a comfortable position on my side because once the suction device is attached it can pop off if there's too much movement. Andrea made sure I had water, reading material and a firm grip on the television remote. She placed a chilly cold compress on the targeted area, then positioned the device and pressed down. It pinched at first, and then the treatment area got cold before quickly growing numb.

After two episodes of *Frazier* Andrea removed the device and immediately massaged the treated area, now bright red, to maximize results by loosening frozen fat cells. She warned that it might hurt a little, but the pain was brief and endurable.

I opted to return the following day to tackle the other side, dressed and joined my family for some holiday ice skating. The treated area was numb for several days,

but that was barely noticeable. A bruise faded away within a week.

Dr. Palceski offers free consultations for anyone interested in Cool Sculpting (ReflectionsDermatology.com). Costs range from \$750 on up depending on the type and number of treatments.

For me, it's been just two weeks so there's no change in the size of my love handles. I should notice something by eight weeks, when I check back

with Andrea for a follow up. I'll share the results—with "before" and "after" pictures—after 12 weeks.

But there's already a change in my attitude. This direct attack on the most intractable problem area of my body has motivated me in surprising ways. I intend to do what I can—through diet and exercise—to help the process along. | • |

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—DR. JEFFREY DOVER

# Radio Waves—Tuned Into Fat Cells!

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**O**RLANDO | There's yet another groundbreaking and non-invasive procedure to reduce fat in tough-to-treat areas like the lower abdomen, love handles, inner thighs, upper arms and neck.

EXILIS uses two different machines to transmit radio frequency rays to targeted areas, causing "uniform molecular excitation." As a result, the fat is liquefied, metabolized by the body and eliminated in urine.

According to Dr. Jerry Horton, whose AesthetiMED practice in Winter Park focuses on anti-aging facial and body rejuvenation, treatments are similar to an ultrasound on a pregnant woman. A cool gel is placed on the targeted area, and then it is rubbed with a wand-like panel for approximately 30 minutes.

"Radio waves are transmitted deep into the tissue, either melting fat cells or rearranging collagen," says Dr. Horton. "Think of a stretched out slinky shrinking back into shape."

Usually a series of four treatments is recommended, spaced two weeks apart. The cost runs from \$1,200 to \$2,000 for each series. The Today Show's Kathy Lee Gifford recently completed EXILIS treatment to remove sagging stomach fat as the result of two pregnancies, and reported a two-inch reduction.

Like Cool Sculpting, EXILIS is recommended only for cosmetic reduction of stubborn fatty tissue, and not as a weight loss technique.

"For best results, procedures like this have to be combined with diet and exercise," says Dr. Horton. "But these new non-invasive procedures are a promising way to shape away unwanted body fat." | • |