

UNDER THE KNIFE

Dear Diary...

Saying goodbye to love handles

From the time I was 18, I had a 30-inch waist. I could eat whatever I wanted and never gained a pound. You can imagine my shock when, around age 35, I found myself having to squeeze into a pair of size-31 jeans. I was working out about regularly and eating pretty well, but had begun accumulating fat in three isolated areas: the center of my lower abdomen and on the sides (the dreaded love handles).

I was complaining to my friend Ryan who told me about a new procedure called Vaser Liposculpture, a gentler form of liposuction done under local anesthesia using ultrasonic energy to liquify fat, which is then gently sucked out. No jabbing. No jarring. No bruising. No weeks of recovery. It sounded too good to be true. I found **Dr. Paul Frank and The Fifth Avenue Dermatology Surgery & Laser Center** (1049 Fifth Ave; 212 327-2919, pfrankmd.com) and called to set up a consultation. Dr. Frank is one of a very few doctors in New York who offers this new procedure and has been featured extensively in the national media when the subject is cosmetic surgery.

At the consultation, Dr. Frank, a 30-something hottie, described the procedure in detail and set my appointment for two weeks later. He would do the procedure on Friday and promised I'd be back at work on Monday. Boy, was I excited. Here's how it all went down...

2:00pm I arrive excited and a bit nervous. A cute gay guy is sitting across from me in the waiting room. I wonder if he's having his fat sucked out too. Or maybe Botox. Hmmm...

2:10pm I am taken in the back by Diane, the first of three beautiful nurses who are putting off a sassy *Charlie's Angels* vibe. Dr. Frank comes in for pre-op consents, review of instructions, a physical, a quick sketch with a blue

Sharpie and a photo shoot of the fat in question.

2:25pm Dr. Frank gives me a hit of Ativan to take the edge off, a couple of antibiotic pills to keep away any infection and a shot of Demerol to kill any pain. I later realize that the shot was the most painful part of the whole day.

2:50pm I am moved to the O.R. and prepped for the procedure.

3:10pm Feeling no pain, I watch as six or seven small incisions are made

on each side of the targeted areas. Dr. Frank then starts filling these areas with a mixture of water, lidocaine (local anesthetic) and epinephrine (to prevent bruising). A little over one liter of fluid fills the areas until somewhat taut. He tells me that this procedure doesn't work on fat people, but rather on people in decent shape with isolated trouble areas. I'm getting a little loopy. I stop listening to the doctor and start chatting with the *Charlie's Angels* girls.

4:00pm Through the same incisions, the Vaser Ultrasound wand is inserted to melt the fat, three minutes in each area. This part is by far the most interesting sensation—no pain, but I'm aware that something's happening inside me.



A MARKED MAN: Pre-surgery

4:15pm With the fat liquified, Dr. Frank sucks it out along with the water mixture through an instrument barely thicker than a pencil. He tells me that he removed about a half a liter of fat but with bigger cases, he gets up to 2.5 liters. I'm high as a kite and fascinated



by the collection container, which looks like a child's beach pail.

4:50pm The Angels clean me up, place small bandages on my incisions and wrap my midsection with stretchy brace that puts pressure on the area.

Diane brings me a bagel and a lovely cup of mint tea.

5:00pm My friend arrives to escort me home where I curl up on the couch and fall asleep early.

Saturday was surprisingly pain-free and I couldn't wait until Sunday morning when I could take off the brace. When it came off, there were remnants of the Sharpie drawings, small blood spots on the gauze over each incision. Despite knowing that there was still fluid under my skin, I could see the fat was gone. A week later I was back in the gym with only tiny scabs on the quickly fading incisions.

The procedure was quick and painless. The recovery was remarkably easy. The results are amazing. I used to be frustrated with parts of my body that didn't seem to be affected by any amount of working out. Now those areas are a non-issue.

You gotta love this technology thing. —Jeff Woodward

Insertion Order

Implants and new treatments can make up for what you've been missing

- Doctors can give as much as they take away these days as well. If you find all the squats in the world still haven't helped to beef up your southerly region, **The Jorgensen Clinic** (38 E 57 St, 212-752-8475, thejorgensenclinic.com) comes to the rescue with calf implants (\$6,500) that can take your lower legs from tiny to toned in a snap. Do you crave the perfect bubble butt? For \$8,500, the docs at Jorgensen can hook you up with that, too (don't worry...we won't tell).
- If you're looking for a non-prosthetic supplement to your workout, The Jorgensen Clinic's **Forever Fit** also offers muscle-hungry marys the option of signing up for a human growth hormone program. For \$375 a month, you can super-size your stud factor with a series of injections that beefing up the proteins in your body responsible for muscle development. Clinic founder **Soren Jorgensen** also clarifies that HGH is "not a steroid," so using it won't get you booted from any pro baseball franchises, either.
- Gay men living with HIV have also had to contend with the additional problem of facial wasting, a side-effect of med cocktails that creates a gaunt appearance in those afflicted with it. A procedure called New-Fill (or Sculptura) developed by gay-friendly New Yorker **Dr. Gervais Fréchet** (55 Christopher St, 212-337-9663), has just been approved by the FDA and can lessen the effects of facial wasting after several treatments.
- An alternative facial wasting treatment is offered by **Park Avenue Aesthetics** (461 Park Avenue South, 212-481-3939, safechange.com), who Radiance treatment boasts immediate, long-lasting results with its "soft tissue enhancing" process.