

3 ways to... GET GREAT LEGS

No sweat... we look at the treatments that can solve three common problems and result in smooth and sculpted, vein-free legs

1

VARICOSE VEINS

If your legs look like an Ordnance Survey map, you may be interested in The Vein Eraser, a new scar- and pain-free varicose vein removal treatment. Not only can you undergo the procedure as a day patient and get back to sports after two to three days, rather than the traditional six to 12 weeks, but compression stockings are only needed for a couple of days, if at all, and, it's claimed, there is no scarring.

Varicose veins commonly occur when one-way valves in the veins don't work and blood flows back down causing them to bulge and become visibly swollen. Rare in people under the age of 20, they become more common with age and pregnant women, but anyone can suffer regardless of age or gender.

The new procedure uses a combination of five treatments helping to destroy, seal and extract the vein without damaging the tissue. These include laser therapy, whereby the catheter tip heats to 120C for 15 seconds; steam vein catheter sclerosis, where steam is pushed into the vein via a catheter for 10 milliseconds; and radiofrequency, where the walls of the veins are destroyed through the heat.

THE LOWDOWN: Dr Florian Netzer will perform The Vein Eraser from mid-December at the London Bridge Plastic Surgery. From £6,800. www.lbps.co.uk

2

HAIR REMOVAL

Say goodbye to shaving, waxing or plucking and permanently eliminate unwanted hair — there's a virtually pain-free laser option on the market. Unlike some older lasers which resulted in burning and sometimes scarring, Soprano XL causes no discomfort and is often likened to a warm massage.

Fast and efficient, it is reliable for every skin colour whether white, tanned, Asian or black — which means if you have been informed your hair is too light in the past, you should be re-assessed. Soprano XL works by using pulses of infrared diode laser energy to gradually heat the hair follicles until they can no longer produce new hair. Using unique technology and a cooling treatment tip, the surface of your skin stays cool and comfortable while the sweeping motion eliminates the likelihood of missed spots.

Around six to eight sessions are usually required, so don't leave hair removal until spring if you want hair-free legs for summer. The first couple of treatments have to be six to eight weeks apart with sessions thereafter progressively increasing to nine to 12 weeks as the hair growth slows due to treatment.

THE LOWDOWN: A full leg and Hollywood bikini costs from £2,100 for a course of eight treatments. www.courthouseclinics.com

3

THIGH SHAPING

If diets and exercise have failed to remove those stubborn pockets of fat or 'saddlebags', Bodyshape may be the answer. This minimally invasive laser-assisted liposuction is now available without general anaesthetic with virtually no downtime. Performed in under an hour, with little bruising or scarring, patients can return to work the following day.

The treatment is performed under local anaesthetic and involves a very small (2mm) cannula being inserted just under the skin around the problem area. As the incision is so small no stitches are needed. The cannula is attached to a SmartLipo MPX machine which uses light energy to selectively liquefy the fat tissue (typically around the hips, thighs or waist), before it is 'aspirated' or sucked out allowing for easier patient recovery and greater sculpting control by the surgeon.

Patients need not worry about saggy skin — the thermal effect of the laser energy causes skin tightening to contour the body for dramatic 'bodyshaping' results and can also improve cellulite. Body contours improve day by day, providing with the best outcome seen up to three to four months post-op.

THE LOWDOWN: Dr Ayoubi of The London Medical & Aesthetic Clinic offers Bodyshape from £2,000 at London's The Cadogan Clinic. www.lmaclinic.co.uk ●

A recent online survey by market research organisation Mintel revealed that out of 2,011 women aged over 16 years old, 48% worried about the shape and size of their thighs, while 69% were worried about having — or developing — a muffin top... www.mintel.com