

PHOTOS BY MALCOLM DENEMARK /FLORIDA TODAY  
Dr. Emran Imami, medical director of Imami Skin & Cosmetic Center, performs a non-surgical Ultra Face Lyft on Lindsay Clarke of Viera, using newly FDA approved "barbed" NovaThreads to lift sagging facial skin.



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Teen dating abuse is on the rise. Know the signs to help the teens in your life.

## Preventing abuse in teen dating



**Susan Hammerling**  
FOR FLORIDA TODAY

There is a national effort to raise awareness about abuse in young adult relationships and to help promote programs or resources in order to prevent it.

Teen dating violence among adolescents can include physical, psychological or sexual abuse, harassment, or stalking between the ages of 12-18 in a current or past relationship.

Only a small amount of teens who have experienced abuse actually report it.

The red flags of dating violence are not always dramatic. Some examples are present in the Violence Wheel, also referred to as the Power & Control Wheel. The violence may occur through intimidation, emotional abuse, manipulation, coercion and threats, jealousy, economic abuse, through children or isolation. The wheel is a chart that analyzes the behaviors that abusers use to obtain control in relationships with others.

Teen dating violence isn't limited to certain areas. It's everywhere. More than a million high school students throughout the U.S. have experienced abuse from someone they dated within a single year.

Some teens experience digital dating abuse. Digital dating abuse is when a partner obtains passwords to their significant other's computer, email or social network. Controlling behavior can happen by a phone call or through social media by Facebook with an online message or post. With digital abuse, posts can be deleted, so it's important to gather evidence quickly by printing out emails or texts with evidence about the occurrences or printing out the call log.

One big problem is that many teens are not taught what a healthy relationship is. In a

See Abuse, Page 2D

# Non-surgical facelift arrives in Brevard

Dr. Emran Imami uses NovaThread to make the years appear to disappear

MARIA SONNENBERG  
FOR FLORIDA TODAY

**D**r. Emran Imami pulled all the right strings, literally, to turn back the clock a good 10 years for patient Lindsay Clark. Clark was the first patient in Brevard to take advantage of the newly FDA approved NovaThread, a face lifting procedure that involves none of the nipping and tucking of traditional face lifts.



Dr. Imami

At the heart of the procedure are needles and thin threads.

"The NovaThread procedure requires inserting of small needles in the facial tissue at the subdermal level, parallel

to the surface of the skin, to lift and contour," explained Imami, medical director of Imami Skin & Cosmetic Center. "The thread remains under the skin and fully absorbs within four to six months, acting as a type of scaffolding which tightens and lifts the chosen facial area."



Dr. Imami performs a non-surgical Ultra Face Lyft on Clarke.

### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

For more information on the NovaThread procedure, call 321-312-4198.

However, these are not the threads you will find in Grandma's sewing basket, but rather polydioxanone, or PDO

threads that promote healing while also rejuvenating the skin. Even better, these threads help stimulate collagen production while keeping the facial skin lifted for a year or more.

"Our skin is very good at repairing itself," explained Imami.

"By inserting NovaThreads for facial lifting, we promote natural healing

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HEALTH

GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO  
One way to eliminate belly fat is to change your diet. Eat plenty of vegetables and cut down on fatty foods.



# Belly fat diets: truth or hype?



**Susie Bond**

NUTRITION FOR TODAY

**USE THIS FORMULA TO DETERMINE YOUR HEALTHY WAIST SIZE**

Measure your height, standing barefoot. Then measure your waist at the smallest part, after you exhale. Your waist size (in inches) should be no more than half of your height (in inches). For example, if you are 5-foot-8 (68 inches), your waist should measure no more than 34 inches.

Belly fat diets seem to be everywhere these days. According to the ads, there are certain foods you should avoid if you want to get rid of that stubborn belly fat. There are entire books on the subject. Most of them are just a bunch of useless hype, but there is scientific evidence that certain dietary factors might influence your waist size.

There are reasons to be concerned about belly fat. Belly fat is different than the fat on our hips and thighs. It is actually considered to be a health hazard and is associated with higher risk of heart disease and diabetes. In fact, experts now believe that waist circumference is a good indicator of disease risk.

There are two types of fat: subcutaneous fat and visceral fat. Subcutaneous fat is the type you can pinch between your

fingers. Visceral fat is stored deep within your abdomen and surrounds your organs. Visceral fat also accumulates in our liver, which can lead to a condition known as “fatty liver.” Visceral fat is the one we are more concerned with in terms of disease risk.

When you measure your waist, you are seeing an indication of both subcutaneous and visceral fat stores.

Both types of fat are influenced by exercise and calorie balance. Your body’s own genetics primarily determine how you lose weight — where it comes off first, where it comes off last, and the proportions of fat lost from various parts of your body.

If you want to reduce

your waist size, the formula is the same as if you want to reduce your hips — increase your calorie output (exercise), and decrease your calorie intake (food). Your body will do the rest. You might get frustrated that you are losing fat faster from your arms and chest area, and it doesn’t seem to be coming off your waist as easily. Just be patient — eventually you’ll lose the weight from your “trouble spot,” but it might take a little longer than you had hoped.

There is evidence, however, that visceral fat is influenced by intake of sugars, refined carbohydrates, trans fat and alcohol. Intake of sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with a 30 per-

cent greater increase in visceral fat. Alcohol contributes to “beer bellies” because it interferes with fat metabolism in our midsection.

Studies show that people who eat a Mediterranean type diet — one that is rich in vegetables, fruits and whole grains, nuts, fish, legumes and olive oil — actually have smaller amounts of visceral fat and fat in the liver than those who consume a traditional American diet. A number of studies also show that people who consume whole grains have smaller waist sizes and have lower body weights than those who eat no grains at all. Consumption of refined grains, however, is associated with larger waist sizes and higher body weights.

The best diet to follow is one that is rich in colorful vegetables and whole grains, moderate in animal protein, and contains more unsaturated fats such as olive oil rather than saturated fats such as butter, and includes a moderate alcohol intake, particularly in the form of red wine.



MALCOLM DENEMARK/FLORIDA TODAY  
Dr. Emran Imami and medical assistant Tiffany Gomez show Lyndsay Clarke of Viera the immediate results halfway through the procedure.

## Facelift

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by creating new collagen underneath the skin.”

But wait, there’s more! The lifting possibilities don’t end at the face, for the NovaThread procedure can also be used to life saggy breasts and butts, not to mention that annoyingly limp skin under the arms and jowls, plus neck bands and knee “overhang.”

A staple for years in orthopedic and cardiothoracic surgery, as well as in other biomedical and clinical applications, sutures comparable to NovaThread have been proven safe and effective.

NovaThread, which received FDA approval late last year, is slightly thicker than its predecessors and features miniscule barbs or hooks that add extra traction to keep facial skin lifted and promote the formation of facial collagen. The absorbable suture material is inserted via needle just under the skin.

The procedure takes less than an hour, leaves minimal, if any, bruising and patients can go about their normal routine the same day, as did Clark, who returned to work right after the visit to Imami’s office in Melbourne.

“Dr. Imami suggested I take some Aleve, but I didn’t even need it,” said Clark. “All I felt was a little pinch.”

Clark, who owns LA Bridal boutique at The Avenue Viera, wants to look her best in front of her clients, but she couldn’t afford the time for traditional plastic surgery, and, frankly, she was scared of going under the knife.

“I always want to put my best foot forward at the store,” said the Viera resident. “I am also afraid of going under anesthesia with plastic surgery and I’ve also had some girlfriends who had plastic surgery and it didn’t turn out well for them.”

Clark is delighted with the NovaThread results, particularly because it turned her former permanent frown upside down.

“People would ask me why I was upset, when I wasn’t,” she said. “Now, I don’t look sad or upset anymore. It was instant gratification.”

In fact, she is so happy with the procedure, she had Imami repeat it, this time with her breasts and buttocks to alleviate the effects of gravity and motherhood on those particular body parts.

“I wanted them back to where they started, so I could be comfortable in a bathing suit,” she said.

Even though he has just started offering the procedure, Imami already has a waiting list for the treatment. Several of Clark’s fellow business owners at The Avenue are among his patients. This anti-aging option is being considered almost preventative in nature by younger patients such as Clark, who is 33.

While it generally costs less than plastic surgery, a NovaThread facelift nevertheless will set you back a couple of thousand dollars and the procedure must be repeated a year or two down the line to keep the same youthful appearance. Imami also notes that the non-surgical facelift is only part of the arsenal he uses to combat aging.

“We can combine NovaThreads with laser, IPL photofacial treatments, botox and fillers to address the patient’s entire facial structure for optimal results,” he said.

Clark doesn’t mind the cost and expects NovaThread to become part of her maintenance regimen well into the future.

“I would do it every year, because I know that 10 years down the road, I won’t have to do something more drastic,” she said. “When you see the results, you know it’s worth it.”

## Abuse

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healthy relationship, both partners are equal. Neither person has authority over the other and both partners are free to live their own lives.

That’s not to say people in a health relationship can’t disagree. However, when they do, respect is exercised by trusting the partner and putting faith in their judgment. In a relationship, respect is how you treat one another daily. Trust is something that is built over time as you learn more about each other.

Some other characteristics of a healthy relationship include being able to listen to one another, valuing one another’s feelings or needs, compromise with each other on issues, talking to or about each other in a kind manner, trying to support each other with hobbies or building each other up, and creating healthy boundaries.

Agent Cyndi Young with the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Special Victims Unit, says it’s important to help teens/young adults understand the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy relationship when dating.

Young said one of the goals of the Sheriff’s Office is to educate and empower young adults in order to prevent and end abusive relationships through training and discussions in the com-

**Agent Cyndi Young with the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Special Victims Unit says it’s important to help teens and young adults understand the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy relationship when dating.**

munity. Brevard County is a rapidly growing community needing parents, educators, and advocates to help promote healthy relationships and prevent future patterns of abuse.

Unhealthy relationships can consist of excessive jealousy, making fun or insulting you, intimidation, overly controlling personalities, isolating you from family or friends, abuse to children or animals, those who always criticize or are continually negative, or playing the victim card.

Remember: no one deserves any kind of abuse, so if you feel like you’re in danger you absolutely have the right to call 911.

In Brevard County, there are several local resources available for help, housing, or counseling, including the Womens’ Center, the Salvation Army, 211 Brevard, Brevard County Sheriff’s Office or Serene Harbor.

Other resources available to victims and their families are:

» National Domestic Violence Hotline at www.thehotline.org or 1-800-799-7233 to get

support, crisis intervention, safety planning assistance and resource referrals for victims of dating violence.

» ChildHelp is a national organization dedicated to preventing and treating child abuse 24/7 at 1-800-4-A-CHILD (422-4453).

» WomensLaw.org: you can look up information by state on laws and restraining orders.

» National Suicide Prevention Line: Available 24/7 by phone at 1-800-273-8255.

» National Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 facebook.com/loveisrespect

In February 2007, this site was launched and became a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline. It was the first 24-hour resource for teens who were experiencing dating violence and abuse and is the only teen helpline serving all of the United States and

its territories.

This helpline is staffed with highly-trained advocates and offers information and advocacy to young adults who have questions regarding their dating relationships.

Also, they provide information to concerned friends and family members, teachers, counselors, service providers and law enforcement.

The website strives to be a safe place for young people to access education on healthy, unhealthy and abusive dating relationships and behaviors.

Free and confidential, live chat and texting services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Chat at www.loveisrespect.org or text loveis to 22522\*

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