

BODY BEAUTIFUL

Looking good has never been so state of the art

By Maria Sonnenberg



ILLUSTRATION BY EMRAN IMAMI SKIN & COSMETIC CENTER PHOTOS
 Dr. Emran Imami of Imami Skin & Cosmetic Center in Melbourne used BodyTite, a minimally invasive technique using radio-frequency energy, to re-contour Latoya Stewart's tummy.

After two C-sections, Latoya Stewart was eager for a tummy makeover.

"I had some areas in my abdomen I didn't like," said the Palm Bay nurse.

Stewart opted for body contouring through liposuction and BodyTite, an advanced, minimally invasive treatment of large body areas through the use of radio-frequency energy. "Combining BodyTite with liposuction optimizes results," said Dr. Emran Imami of Imami Skin & Cosmetic Center. With liposuction alone, the maximum expected loss of fat approved by the FDA is 11 pounds. By adding BodyTite, as well as diet and exercise, Stewart upped that number to an awe-inspiring 20 pounds.

Liposuction has been around since the early 1980s. This procedure vacuums excess fat from "problem areas," such as the stomach, buttocks, hips, thighs, and even the chin and neck. It's a surgical form of body contouring, an arsenal of procedures that includes abdominoplasty, aka the tummy tuck. Liposuction is performed with just local anesthesia, while tummy tucks are considered major surgery that requires general anesthesia.

In a liposuction procedure, a thin hollow tube is inserted through a small incision where it loosens and removes fat via surgical vacuum. Results are visible immediately because, well, the fat is no longer there.

The tummy tuck is the most complicated of body contouring techniques. It starts with an incision below the bellybutton, so the abdominal skin can be lifted and the underlying weakened muscles repaired. A second incision may be necessary to remove excess skin from the upper abdomen, which is pulled down, trimmed and sutured to create a new opening for the bellybutton.

NO KNIVES

Liposuction and tummy tucks are only two of the body-contouring weapons now available. Nonsurgical alternatives, called lipolysis, rely on different methods to target fat cells and help tighten skin.

Cryolipolysis, such as CoolSculpting, relies on very cold temperatures to destroy fat cells. Laser lipolysis, such as Zerona, uses lasers with the same intent. BodyTite, a radio-frequency lipolysis, channels ultrasound waves and heat deep into the dermis and subcutaneous tissue to stimulate the body's natural collagen renewal process — with fat-melting results.

Unlike tummy tucks and liposuction, which both offer immediate and significant changes, nonsurgical body contouring can take from three to six months to produce final results. Nonsurgical body contouring can be used with liposuction to speed things along. Liposuction can be combined with a tummy tuck, too.

At his practice, Imami offers a powerful trifecta of treatment in a signature non-surgical tummy tuck that incorporates BodyTite, BeautiFill's laser-assisted liposuction, and Morpheus8 Body, a type of microneedling that uses fractional radio frequency >>

to tighten skin, reduce wrinkles and build collagen. Eva Longoria and Kim Kardashian are just a couple of the celebrities who have used Morpheus8 Body. Longoria became a fan when she could not satisfactorily rectify post-partum physical changes with exercise and diet.

STRATEGIC TARGETS

However, body contouring techniques are not a weight-loss alternative. "An appropriate patient for body contouring is stable in weight but has extra body fat in areas that don't respond well to exercise," Imami said. "The ideal BMI for body contouring is 25 to 30." BMI refers to Body Mass Index, the measure of body fat based on height and weight. Imami will accept patients with a BMI as high as 35 but advises those beyond that range to return when they have been able to lower their weight.

Fat lost through diet, workouts and lifestyle changes is typically lost uniformly throughout the body, not just in sections. So without body contouring, losing fat from areas such as the stomach can be extremely difficult. The body hangs on to belly fat because it is a visceral fat that plays a role in how the body functions.

"Some levels of visceral fat are normal and help protect organs," Imami said. "Too much visceral fat can be dangerous and lead to diabetes, heart disease and stroke."

Most body contouring modalities are relatively pain-free, >>



Imami holds a container of the excess fat that was removed from Stewart's stomach during her outpatient liposuction procedure.



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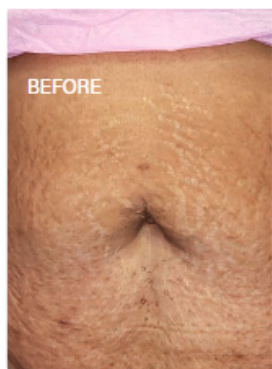
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BEFORE



AFTER

Pictures of Stewart's stomach before her procedure, left, and after, right, reveal a significant loss of unwanted fat. With liposuction, BodyTite, diet and exercise, Stewart was able to lose 20 pounds.

with short recovery times. Stewart sailed through her combination procedure, which was performed on an out-patient basis at Imami Skin & Cosmetic Center's offices on Broadband Drive in Melbourne. Only local anesthesia was required, and Stewart listened to music as her tummy received its extreme makeover.



Dr. Emran Imami of Imami Skin & Cosmetic Center in Melbourne.

"I didn't feel anything and the downtime was minimal," Stewart said. She scheduled the procedure for a Friday, so she could rest over the weekend before resuming her normal work routine on Monday. There was no scarring. "It looks very natural," Stewart said. "You can't tell I have had the procedure."

INCENTIVE

While problems are minimal, they do still exist, particularly for surgical body contouring. Tummy tucks carry the risk of complications from general anesthesia. Risks with liposuction include infection, and unexpected pain and swelling. Non-surgical options have much more limited risks. Soreness or swelling are the primary issues that can arise.

But the very visible physical changes and the increase in a positive self-image far outweigh risks for most patients, who feel their bodies are now better defined and younger looking, with smoother skin. A bonus of body contouring is the incentive it provides to stick with regular exercise and a healthy diet. Those dramatic and immediate changes will only last if the individual's weight remains stable. It is not a license to gobble with abandon.

Stewart is pumped to keep her new figure, vowing to work out and eat well to do so. She's pleased enough to consider "sculpting" another part of her body. "I'm thinking of the love handles next," she said. ⬇️