

## Lipo Dissolve: A New Way To Lose Inches?

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**(KSDK)** - You may have caught the ads on television and radio. They tout a treatment that helps get rid of unwanted fat by getting a series of shots. It's a non-invasive cosmetic treatment called Lipo Dissolve.

But does it really work?

Here's what you need to know before you pay thousands of dollars for your injections.

The medical director of the largest clinic offering Lipo Dissolve in the St. Louis area says it doesn't work for everyone, even if you're fit. Depending on your body weight, some believe your money may be better spent on a nutritionist or a membership at the gym.

Angie Hurst, 32, is about to have another Lipo Dissolve treatment.

"I had my stomach or my abs done. I've completed that area and I had great results. I was hoping to lose the couple of inches that I had gained after having two children which I was successful. So now I'm doing my outer thighs," she said.

Hurst doesn't need to lose weight.

"There's those little areas that only you know about, that if you could fix them, why not?" said Hurst.

Doctors say that actually makes her the perfect candidate for this cosmetic treatment, which is growing in popularity.

For the first time in 2005, the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery started tracking the injection of small amounts of medicine into the middle part of the skin. Some 4,773 procedures were reported last year.

"It's very important to ask what's contained in the injected materials," said Dr. David Caplin, Medical Director of the Advanced Lipo Dissolve Center in Chesterfield. "There are a number of different formulas people use and unfortunately the word Lipo Dissolve can be used by anybody, regardless of what they're actually injecting into the patient."

Caplin is a plastic and reconstructive surgeon who became the medical director of the center earlier this year. He said what's given at Advanced Lipo Dissolve shouldn't be confused with mesotherapy, which he calls more of a cocktail of drugs and vitamins injected into the skin.

At his center, there are just two chemicals in the syringe: phosphatidylcholine which is derived from soy and deoxycholate which is produced in the body's digestive system. It's also known as PCDC.

Keep in mind, neither mesotherapy nor Lipo Dissolve is FDA approved. So exactly how does PCDC work?

"The PCDC work together to help break down the cell walls and allow the contents of the cell to be liberated," explained Caplin. "And then the body metabolizes it and gets rid of it through normal metabolic pathways."

The result, most doctors agree, is the permanent destruction of fat cells.

"I think it definitely works," said Dr. John Holds, who specializes in aesthetic eyelid surgery, but also offers Lipo Dissolve and Botox at his St. Louis office. Like Caplin, he also cautions anyone to ask what's in the syringe and whose giving the shots before paying.

"If you go to one of the courses where they're teaching these treatments now you have all sorts of other medical specialties, podiatrists, people who've had no other background ever in cosmetic treatment who are seeing this as an easy way to try to earn a lot of money," said Holds.

How much money?

For example, a single treatment area -- love handles, for example -- costs about \$2,000 at the Advanced Lipo

Dissolve Center.

In the words of Caplin, it's meant to help people lose inches, not pounds. So this isn't for anyone who is obese, or even overweight.

If you have a body mass index over 30, Caplin and Holds agree Lipo Dissolve probably isn't for you.

"The best candidates for lipo therapy are really the same candidates for liposuction -- patients who are hopefully people as close to their ideal body weight and exercise," said Dr. Caplin.

Ask whether "before" photographs and measurements will be taken so you can compare your results at the end of your treatment.

And there are side effects, including redness, burning at the injection sight, bruising, itching, swelling and in rare cases, an allergic reaction to the PCDC.

Hurst will be back in two to three weeks for another treatment. She'll get five or six in all and will stay swollen the entire time. The results should be visible a few weeks after the final set of shots. That's what happened with her abs.

"You're waiting and waiting and I was thinking at the end, 'Maybe this is not a good idea,'" recalls Hurst. "But once the final swelling went down ... I was extremely happy with the results."

Lipo Dissolve works in 90 to 95 percent of patients, but it's impossible to predict who it won't work in ahead of time.

Some who had the treatment aren't happy with the result, and say they noticed no difference following the procedure.

The Advanced Lipo Dissolve Center offers a 100 percent money back guarantee.

But keep in mind, the center may decide whether your treatment really worked or not. They may even offer another series of free shots to see if more treatment achieves the desired result, something you may not be interested in doing if you were bothered by side effects or the pain of the shots.

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