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Patients recount experiences with lipo-dissolve company

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A Valley company promises to help its clients slim down with special injections. But is the procedure living up to the hype? [The Healthline 3 Team](#) has been investigating fig, formerly known as Advanced Lipo Dissolve, for months. And now the [FDA](#) is looking into it as well.

We first looked into lipo dissolve last Spring. Dozens of fig patients called and e-mailed us after our story aired. Most of them weren't happy with their results. Some hoped we could help them get their money back.

fig opened its doors here just over a year ago. And the company says in that time it has helped hundreds of Valley residents lose unwanted inches. Patients undergo a series of injections which are supposed to dissolve fat. They're also encouraged to watch what they eat and exercise.

Dr. John Minoli is fig's medical director. He was unable to give us an on-camera interview for this report, but in a previous story he told us the drugs used in lipo-dissolve provide a permanent fix. "We see dramatic results and really, in some cases, it's modest results," Dr. Minoli told *Healthline 3*.

Wendy Rowland is spending \$10,000 on lipo-dissolve. She thinks it's worth every penny. "I definitely think that I'm getting more contouring that I just was not getting with working out, so for me that's the difference," Wendy said.

Anna Marie Forgit is also a believer. "If you looked at my before picture and then look at me now, you can definitely see that the fat areas in that area are less lumpy, it's more flat and I look a heck of a lot better," Anna explains.

But a lot of former fig patients are not happy with their results. Dozens contacted us. We met with several in our studio.

Beth: Any change for you?

Nancy Smith (former fig patient): I've got little lumpy bumpies all over the lower ab. You can feel those suckers.

Yvette Fortner (former fig patient): I did my six sessions, nothing. Just like the other lady, my right thigh got a little bigger. I want people to know that it's a scam. Don't waste your money.

And numerous former patients tell us they had a bad physical reaction to lipo-dissolve. *Healthline 3* told you about Alison Nolan several months ago. Her injection sites became inflamed and infected. She ended up in the emergency room. "It looked black and blue when the lumps came up. First it was all red then it bruised up. It was nasty," Alison said.

Another former patient says the procedure caused her blood pressure to skyrocket. Another man we spoke with is concerned about a bump on his skin that won't go away, 8 months after treatment.

Ginger Lev (former fig patient): I got home and I was like, 'Look, I'm pregnant!'

Beth: From just swelling?

Ginger: From swelling and there's this huge bruise. And you go to bed and you start crying. And you're hurting. You are really hurting.

And when it was all over, these patients had trouble getting their money back even though fig

offers a money back guarantee.

The company says:

Each and every day at fig, we make it a priority to ensure our patients are satisfied and achieve measurable results. We are unaware of other providers of cosmetic procedures that offer a full refund policy to guarantee results.

But is lipo-dissolve safe? That's the subject of serious debate. Dr. Michael Edwards is a plastic surgeon in Summerlin. He says the biggest concern is simply what's not known about the procedure's effects. "We don't know (the effects). By 'we' I mean the physicians who like to base their practice on science, don't know what the long term effects are of disrupting fat cells."

Lipo-dissolve is not FDA approved, but the government is looking into it. In the meantime, the FDA tells us it cannot assure the safety and efficacy of these types of drugs.

Several doctors tell us the procedure has already been banned in Brazil. "It baffles me why one country (Brazil) takes a product off and then it's used here," plastic surgeon Dr. Julio Garcia told *Healthline 3*.

Both Dr. Edwards and Dr. Garcia want to see more research done. "It'd be like experimenting on you, if I were to do it now, and I can't stomach that," Dr. Edwards said.

There are other places in the valley that do lipo-dissolve or similar procedures. fig's money back guarantee is offered to patients who don't see "visible results" after completing their treatment program. But what qualifies as a visible result is up for debate. That's determined by fig's medical review board in St. Louis.

Some of the patients we spoke with did get their money back but they tell us it was an uphill battle. One woman filed against the company in small claims court. Some asked us for help. Others consulted an attorney.

And, in order to get a refund patients must sign a document which says they won't talk about their experience at fig. That's why some were hesitant to go on camera.



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