

St. Louis Business Journal - October 22, 2007
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ST. LOUIS BUSINESS JOURNAL

Friday, October 19, 2007

'They said I was going to be beautiful by summer'

St. Louis Business Journal - by [Julia M. Johnson](#)

The *Business Journal* spoke with several women who filed complaints against Fig. with the **Better Business Bureau**. All eventually received refunds for their LipoDissolve treatments, but said it required complaints to the BBB to get results. Fig. Chief Executive Rob Semaan said his company is reorganizing its Patient Services Center and seeking consumer feedback to improve customer satisfaction. Two former patients agreed to share their stories for publication:

Dusti Braschler, a home-based medical transcriptionist, said she began LipoDissolve treatments at Fig. in February 2006 on her lower abdomen and obliques. She said she was scheduled for a series of six treatments at a total cost of about \$4,000, and read on Fig.'s Web site that she could receive a refund if she didn't experience measurable results.

"They said I was a perfect candidate for the treatment, but it didn't work," she said. "They told me that if I didn't go through the whole series, I wouldn't get a refund. So I did the six I was supposed to."

Then, Braschler said, she was told that her "before" and "after" photos would have to be presented to Fig.'s review board before a refund could be processed. "I asked to be in that meeting, but they said no."

Braschler did end up getting a refund after she registered her complaint with the BBB, but it took several weeks longer to arrive than Fig. promised, she said. The side effects she experienced after the injections also were considerable:

"I had tons of bruising and bloating. The pain was awful. I looked like I was four or five months pregnant. People talk about doing this on your lunch break, but I couldn't get out of bed the morning after each treatment.

"I didn't know enough about it (LipoDissolve)," Braschler said. "I saw it on a billboard on Highway 40, but I didn't see anything bad about it. I was excited to feel good about myself again, but it ended up being a huge battle. For just \$500 more than the \$4,000 I paid, I could have had liposuction."

Cindy Smith, owner of the 10 Mile House Restaurant and Bar in west St. Louis County, said she signed up for LipoDissolve at Fig. early last year.



"They said I was going to be beautiful by summer," she said. "But I knew I didn't want to do it anymore after the second treatment. The pain at first was horrible. They said I could go back to work, but with every shot, I was out of work a day and a half. When I did go back, I had to wear looser clothes because my stomach was so swollen. The pain was constant; I was afraid of anyone coming near me."

Still, Smith finished the course of treatment because she was told the same as Braschler -- that she'd have to go through all six visits before she could ask for a refund. Smith said the cost of her treatment was also \$4,000, but she stopped payment after the first \$1,800 because "I knew I was going to fight for my money back." She said Fig. offered her additional treatments at \$99 each, but she declined because of the pain.

Smith said she later resorted to a tummy tuck procedure done by a plastic surgeon because the LipoDissolve treatments didn't work for her.

"I showed everybody what had happened (to my stomach after the LipoDissolve treatments)," Smith said. "It was a disaster. Horrible."

jjohnson@bizjournals.com

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