

# How To Combat Fat

The latest surgical and non-surgical cosmetic procedures available

In conversation with  
Dr. Patrick Treacy



Obesity now affects 16% of women and 20% of men in Ireland, according to government statistics. Notwithstanding this, a further 33% of women and 46% of men are overweight. The most worrying part about these statistics is that they show that obesity has almost doubled on the island of Ireland over the past decade. In view of these worrying trends, Maura Derrane decided to interview Dr. Patrick Treacy, Medical Director of the Ailesbury Clinics about the latest non-surgical and surgical options available on the Irish market to treat obesity.

**Maura Derrane: What exactly is fat and is it true there are different types?**

**Dr PJT:** When doctors refer to fat, they generally refer to energy storage adipose tissue that is stored under the skin and this is the only layer in which most treatments such as SmartLipo, Vaser and conventional liposuction take place. Liposuction is not used to remove deeper abdominal omental fat or the type of fat found surrounding the eyesockets, etc. Most doctors agree that fat is deposited in the abdomen and limbs in either a superficial or a deep layer. The superficial layer is denser and it contains fibrous tissue. The deeper fat layer is less dense and it contains less fibrous tissue.

**Do you prescribe weight loss tablets and how do they work?**

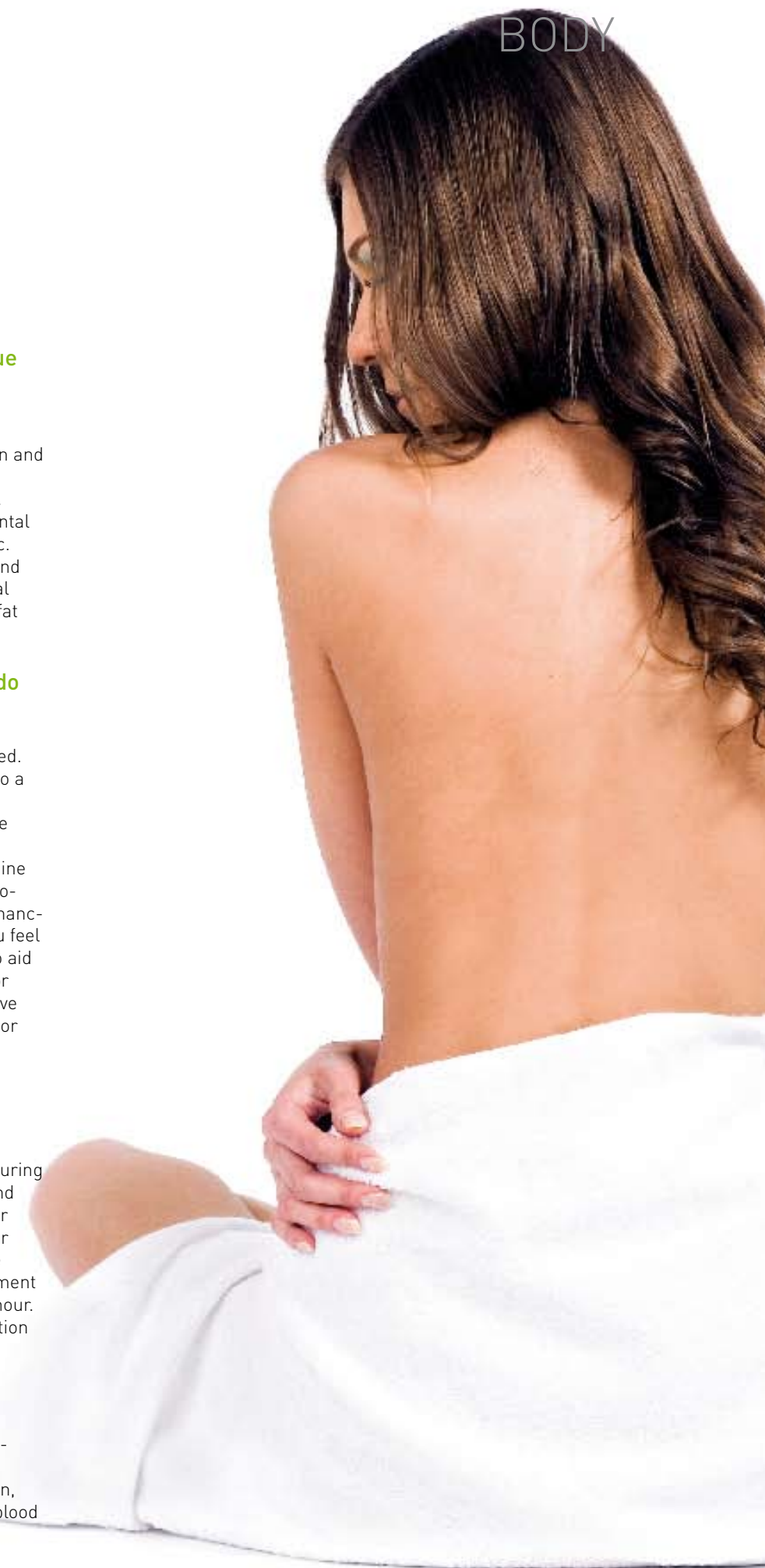
Yes, I do. There are two or three main types that are used. Most are of moderate use and many people hanker back to a previous time of using amphetamines. We presently use Reductil and Xenical capsules. Reductil contains the active ingredient sibutramine, which works by affecting neurotransmitters in the brain. It is thought that sibutramine helps people to lose weight by increasing the amount of noradrenaline and serotonin free to act in the brain. This enhances the feeling of fulfillment from eating, and so makes you feel satisfied after eating less food. Reductil is only licensed to aid weight loss in people with a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher, and people with a BMI of 27 or higher who also have other obesity related risk factors, such as type 2 diabetes or high cholesterol.

**Can you tell us about the new novel treatment called UltraShape®**

UltraShape® is the first safe and surgery-free body contouring treatment to successfully remove fat cells using ultrasound technology for effective and visible results. It is suitable for removing unwanted fat from the abdomen, inner and outer thighs and flanks. UltraShape is a non-invasive procedure requiring no anaesthetic needles or down time. The treatment is performed by a doctor or nurse, taking as little as one hour. After a single treatment, an average circumference reduction of 2.5cm is observed, equivalent to one dress size.

**How does UltraShape work?**

The UltraShape treatment uses high energy focused ultrasound technology to remove unwanted fat. An ultrasound beam selectively targets fat cells in the chosen body region, and disrupts them without harming surrounding nerves, blood vessels or skin.





#### What happens to the fat cells?

During the treatment, the fat cell membranes are disrupted and dispersed into the fluid between the cells before being transported through the vascular and lymphatic systems to the liver. Once in the liver, there is no distinction between fat coming from the UltraShape treatment and the fat originating from consumed food. They are both cleared from the liver via the body's natural mechanisms.

#### How many treatments of UltraShape are required?

This really depends on the amount of fat you wish to lose. You can expect to lose up to 2.5cm in body circumference per treatment. At present, we are able to treat the abdomen, inner and outer thighs (saddle bags) and flanks (love handles). Present research shows that 3 treatments give the best results.

#### How long does an UltraShape treatment take?

Again this really depends on the size of the area to be treated. The time also includes a consultation and preparation for treatment. As a guide, you should expect your appointment to last between 1- 2 hours.

#### What happens during treatment?

After your consultation, the doctor (or nurse) will measure your body circumference and mark the area(s) to be treated. A hand-held device delivering ultrasound beams gently glides over the marked area, guided by innovative tracking technology to ensure smooth and even contouring results. You can resume your daily routine as soon as the treatment is over. Many treatment centres are now using this machine in association with RF devices such as VelaSmooth® or Accent®. The majority of patients report no pain or discomfort. Some patients may experience a mild tingling and a warm sensation during the pulses.

#### Do patients experience any side-effects following treatment?

I am not aware of any side-effects to date. Patients may experience some redness and a mild swelling to the treated area(s), but this should subside within a few hours. Patients have stated that there has been no post-treatment pain or discomfort.

#### What price is UltraShape treatment?

UltraShape normally costs €1700 for 3 treatment areas. Patients receive radiofrequency to the area between treatments.

#### We have heard that SmartLipo™ causes minimal discomfort, bruising and side effects and is very safe. Is this your view?

SmartLipo is a laser lipolysis procedure, recently popularised by Jade Goody from Celebrity Big Brother. As SmartLipo is performed under a local anaesthetic, it is proving to be a very popular treatment with less downtime and side-effects than traditional liposuction. It is used for body contouring and uses a fine cannula to deliver a safe, powerful laser to heat the fat cells, causing them to break down. The fat deposits are simply absorbed and pass out of the body, naturally.

#### How does the SmartLipo procedure work?

During SmartLipo, a very small cannula (tube) of approximately 1.0 mm to 2.0 mm in diameter containing a laser fiber is inserted into the skin. The cannula is moved back and forth delivering the laser's energy directly to the fat cells, causing them to rupture and easily drain away. The laser energy also interacts with the dermis, resulting in collagen shrinkage to give a smooth,

sculptured finish. Due to the cannula's small size, SmartLipo is a minimally invasive procedure and can be performed under local anesthesia. The laser causes small blood vessels to coagulate immediately on contact, resulting in less bleeding, swelling and bruising – and a quicker recovery time than conventional liposuction. Because general anaesthesia is unnecessary, the procedure is very safe, with only minimal side effects.

### What body regions can be treated with SmartLipo?

SmartLipo is ideal for treating small areas of the face, neck, arms, breasts (gynaecomastia), and areas of loose and flabby skin (floppy skin). It can be an adjunct to traditional liposuction procedures; although I feel it will never replace conventional liposuction. Ideal candidates are in good health, of normal body weight and have realistic expectations for the results.

### How many SmartLipo treatments would a patient require?

This depends on the size and severity of the area to be treated. The best estimate is that SmartLipo will remove about a "fistful" of fat. Of course, your Consultant should advise on this during your initial consultation. For most patients, typically only one treatment is required. The session may last from 45 minutes to one hour for each area treated. One, two or three areas can be treated at a single session

### Does a patient need to do anything post-treatment?

Yes, after the treatment a patient usually needs to wear a compression garment for several days to several weeks, depending on the body area being treated. Rest is recommended after the procedure and activity may be resumed gradually. Refrain from hot tubs or strenuous exercise for 2 weeks.

### Does SmartLipo treat cellulite?

The procedure may improve the body's shape and may improve cellulite to a certain degree but I would not advocate it as a treatment.

### Does SmartLipo hurt?

Pain thresholds vary from person to person. However, local anaesthetic is applied to the area to be treated and the procedure is virtually painless.

### Are there any side-effects with SmartLipo?

Minor bruising or discomfort may occur in the short term. Sometimes the doctor may have to place a small stitch into the entry port and this would have to be removed seven-ten days later.

### When can I expect to see results and are the results permanent?

Results can be seen as soon as a week with continued improvement over several months. The amount of time really depends on whether the doctor removes some of the aspirate or not. The makers of SmartLipo claim that the procedure works permanently as adults do not create new fat cells. Remember, when a person gains weight, the other fat cells will expand and fat may be deposited in areas where the procedure was not performed. SmartLipo is a very effective treatment, however, like any weight loss programme, a sensible diet and lifestyle is necessary to maintain condition and efficacy.

### How much does SmartLipo cost?

Overall cost depends on the extent of the treatment. These are usually in the range €2,500 per treatment area. Patients should be careful of the recent upsurge in media advertisements offering this treatment outside proper clinics. Check online [www.medicalcouncil.ie](http://www.medicalcouncil.ie) and make sure your treating doctor is registered in Ireland.



Doctors have experienced great success in treating all of the following areas: abdomen, thighs, knees, buttocks, hips, back, arms, male breasts, love handles, chin and neck areas.

#### What is VASER Liposelection®?

VASER LipoSelection® is a new and very different way to precisely and efficiently remove unwanted fat. It is an alternative to the harsh techniques of traditional liposuction; VASER LipoSelection® uses state-of-the-art ultrasound technology to break up fat while leaving surrounding tissue - such as nerves, blood vessels, and connective tissue - relatively intact. Patients report highly satisfactory results and low to minimal pain\*.

#### How does VASER LipoSelection® work?

High frequency sound energy emitted by the VASER System breaks up fat on contact while leaving surrounding tissues relatively intact. The fragmented fat flows into the wetting solution and is extracted through suction and massage. This process results in smooth, predictable outcomes.

#### What body areas can be treated with VASER LipoSelection®?

Doctors have experienced great success in treating all of the following areas: abdomen, thighs, knees, buttocks, hips, back, arms, male breasts, love handles, chin and neck areas.

#### What happens during the VASER LipoSelection® procedure?

First, the area to be sculpted is filled with a special infusion of lidocaine and saline solution that helps numb the site and shrink the blood vessels (to minimise blood loss and reduce bruising). This solution wets and fills the area to be treated, making fat easier to break up with the VASER System's sound energy. Then a small probe transmits sound energy (similar to that used for cataract removal in the eye) that breaks up fat on contact, while leaving other important tissues relatively intact.

Finally, suction and massage of the sculpted site removes the emulsified fat quickly.

#### How much fat can be taken off during a procedure?

There are medical limits to how much fatty tissue can be safely taken from the body. This is usually in the region of 3 to 4 litres. One way to get a good idea to estimate this for yourself is to stand and bend from the waist. The amount of "loose-hanging" fat you can easily grab above / below your waist will approximate what can be removed. Bear in mind that this procedure is not intended as

a weight loss solution. The goal is to create a slimmer silhouette. You may not notice a significant amount of weight loss, but should be pleased with your slimmer new shape.

#### How much does Vaser® cost?

Vaser usually costs about €4,500, which is the same price as conventional liposuction.

#### Can you tell us something about the LAP-BAND Procedure?

I am not an expert in this technique but the idea behind the operation is to create a small pouch in the upper part of the stomach with a controlled and adjustable stoma, without stapling, thus limiting food intake. A gastric band device is introduced through tiny (1cm) incisions in the abdomen and is placed around the upper part of the stomach. The resulting pouch (or the "new stomach") dramatically reduces the functional capacity of the stomach. The band has a balloon from the inside that is adjustable and can reduce stoma size, thus prolonging the period of fullness.

#### How long does the procedure take?

The operation is performed under general anaesthesia and can last between 30 minutes and 1 hour. The Band is fitted around the uppermost part of the stomach, forming a 15cc small pouch. It is designed so that it can be inflated or deflated at any time after the operation. This helps the patient continually lose weight until they reach their goals. The restriction takes place in the radiology suite and normally takes 15 minutes. This simple procedure is painless, they inject saline into a port placed under the skin in the wall of the stomach. The tube that comes off of the band leads to the port.

#### Any dangers with the technique?

Although the technique appears simple it should only ever be done in a proper hospital environment. Patients who require this technique are usually extremely obese and are by nature an anaesthetic mortality risk. Hence there is evidence that that some patients have died during this procedure.

**Dr. Patrick Treacy, Cosmetic Practitioner is Medical Director of The Ailesbury Clinics, Dublin and Cork. Dr. Treacy has worked in his profession in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, South Africa, Gibraltar, and Ireland. Dr. Treacy is an international guest speaker and lectures overseas on fibroblast transplants and the application of radiosurgery to cosmetic medicine.**

For further information log onto [www.ailesburyclinic.ie](http://www.ailesburyclinic.ie)