

highly defined

New Zealand cosmetic surgeon **Dr Mark Gray** discusses a liposuction technique which promises to re-shape and re-sculpt bodies. Jessica Rule reports.

New Zealand cosmetic surgeon Dr Mark Gray believes Hi Definition LipoSelection offers a new twist on an old ideology. Every day men and women work out at the gym in the quest to gain a toned and muscular physique. Many also diet to remove their layers of fat above their muscles, but there are some areas of stubborn fat that, no matter how much hard work is done, won't budge.

Hi Definition LipoSelection may be a solution. 'It selectively removes fat from around the muscular structures, particularly around the abdomen or flanks, arms, legs, ankles and buttocks,' says Dr Gray. 'Secondly, it allows introduction of fat into areas requiring bulking or shaping, such as the pectoral or deltoid regions. With this three-dimensional technique we can shift the stubborn areas that only a fanatical gym regimen combined with a strict diet can achieve – working out can only get us so far.'



Artistic 'after' photograph of actual patient



BEFORE

AFTER Vaser Hi Definition by Dr Gray

The technology

Vaser Hi Definition Body Sculpting is the next generation in advanced liposuction technique. It entails the removal of both deep and superficial fat to boost the visibility of well-toned abdominal muscles underneath.

'The key difference between this technique and traditional liposuction is that instead of simply debulking areas of fat in certain parts of the body, we work to strip and sculpt existing fat to match the contours of the underlying muscle,' explains Dr Gray. 'Ideally we like to perform the whole body at once, although it can be done locally.'

Dr Gray explains the technique is highly personalised and even gender-specific. 'If the patient is female she can opt for a more feminine, curvy silhouette or a more athletic physique, while men may be able to achieve obvious six-pack abs, oblique muscles and pecs,' he says. 'We map out the patient using skeletal and muscular architecture and shape the fat to deliver defined and sculpted results.'

According to Dr Gray, studies in the US have indicated 65 percent of the patients for this procedure are male. 'Male ideals rarely change, whereas female body fashions tend to swing between Rubenesque and athletic,' he says.

Dr Gray says he has had success in experimental procedures with Hi Definition LipoSelection, the applications for which are still being explored. 'We've been able to strip fat around the breasts for definition, and transplant the fat into the subcutaneous tissue and beneath muscle to provide volume,' he says. 'Sculpting elegant arms and adding feminine curves to flat bottoms has also proved popular with female patients.'

As a technical process, Vaser Hi Def uses ultrasound to liquefy fat before it's suctioned out of the body with a small 3mm diameter cannula or probe. This technique has been designed to minimise tissue trauma. Dr Gray says the new advanced keyhole technique can leave nerves, connective tissue and blood vessels largely undisturbed, which could mean significantly less bruising for patients.

The Vaser probe is introduced into the fat via a small incision in the skin. 'The ultrasound literally melts the fat, which can be collected and then used to build up other areas,' he explains.

The results

'Hi Definition Body Sculpting is suited to patients who have minimal to medium fat deposits and who have some muscle tone under their fat layers already,' says Dr Gray. 'The procedure also allows for a shrink-wrap effect, whereby the skin contracts to highlight the results.'

Dr Gray also believes the results are highly dependent on the expertise of the surgeon. 'I would recommend someone who has trained specifically in the Hi Definition medium.'

According to Dr Gray, the ideal candidate for this procedure leads a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise and has good skin quality. 'Patients should be able to keep their grooves and definition as long as they stay in shape,' says Dr Gray. 'If you move fat in one place you won't likely put it on again in that area, although we do leave some residual fat so it is possible to see a little gain if weight goes up.'

Originally developed in South America by Alfredo Hoyos, Vaser Hi Definition was then refined by leading US cosmetic plastic surgeon Dr John Millard. His success with the revolutionary new procedure has been well documented in the United States.

'Skin Institute was the first clinic in Australasia to use and acquire this technology,' says Dr Gray. 'We trained at the Advanced Body Sculpting Institute, run by Dr Millard, and we offer world class, comparable results.'

Dr Gray explains that this is an extensive training course that requires experience with Vaser technology along with further training and hands-on teaching. 'This is not a procedure for the occasional operator or non-specialist,' he warns. 'I believe choosing an experienced and highly trained doctor is worth travelling the distance for, because in the wrong hands this technology may cause bleeding and sub-optimal results.'

The procedure can be performed under local or general anesthesia, depending on the area to be treated and the patient's desires.

The expectation

The procedure itself is very similar to that of tumescent liposuction, although Dr Gray says it takes longer due to the detailed nature. 'We promote high standards of post-procedure care, so our patient plan involves active massages to prevent skin or fat irregularities forming, compression garments and drains for excess fluids to expedite recovery.'

The recovery time is usually around seven days and most patients can return to the gym in two weeks. Some bruising and swelling is likely. Practitioners say results from Vaser Hi Definition can be seen almost immediately, with the best results visible after around two to three months.

'I've been performing liposuction procedures for many years and this is a quantum leap in body sculpting. It's redefining the aesthetic attainable through traditional liposuction,' Dr Gray says. 'In my opinion, this is achieving remarkably better results.' **acsm**