

Perfect Legs

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Every man and woman, at some point in their lives, fantasizes about having the perfect body but realistically very few will ever be able to achieve this goal. There are various techniques available to help one attain their idea body. I would like to focus this discussion on methods of approaching perfect legs.

The areas of the legs consist of the buttocks, thighs, calves and ankles. Each of these areas has the potential for unique problems but by far the most common concern for women are unsightly Varicose and Spider Veins. Varicose Veins are large ropey ugly appearing structures that are typically red or blue in color. Spider Veins, on the other hand, are smaller spider-like veins that can appear on almost any portion of the leg. Up until ten years ago, the only treatment for Varicose and Spider Veins was either a relatively radical surgical procedure called Stripping the Veins or an Injection Procedure with saline called Sclerotherapy. With the development of new procedures, both of these treatments have fallen into disfavor.

The current state of the art treatment for Varicose Veins is a Laser or Radio Frequency Technique used to close or seal the leaking valves. As far as Spider Veins are concerned, Sclerotherapy using a foam solution, which is significantly less painful than saline, has achieved improved results. The basic concept revolving around Varicose Veins is that the veins are a result of valves malfunctioning. The valves that are present in the Varicose Veins leak, leading to the enlargement of the veins. The diagnosis is made by an ultrasound and the treatment is based on the ultrasonic findings. In general, the treatment consists of closing the leaking valves with either a Laser or Radio Frequency Filament. This is then followed by treating the Spider Veins using injection Sclerotherapy, unless there are underlying valves that malfunction. If this is the case then the valves should be treated first by a Closure Technique followed by treating the Spider Veins.

The next area of concern for many people is the fat in their legs. There are several ways of treating fat in the legs but the gold standard in Liposuction. Liposuction can be done in any area in the legs, from the buttocks, to the thighs, to the calves, to the ankles. The technique of Liposuction that is used in my office is called "Tumescent Liposuction." This is done awake with local anesthesia and no need for intravenous sedation.

It is done by a technique called "Tumescent" which means a very dilute local anesthesia is injected into the area between the skin and the muscle where the fat lies.

This results in the fat rising to the surface as the anesthesia sets. Small millimeter pinholes are made

in strategic areas and through very tiny cannulas the fat is removed. Patients are able to return to most routine activities the very next day. In addition to Tumescent Liposuction, another technique used by my office is that of Powered Liposuction, whereby the liposuction cannula is connected to a high powered air source which is able to vibrate more than 1,000 times per second to do the liposuction very quickly resulting in a smooth end result. In addition to having Liposuction of the legs, women often are interested in lifting the buttock areas. This can be done by the so-called "Brazilian Buttock Lift" whereby fat taken from one body area can be placed into the buttocks area to enhance the contour of the buttocks. Another advantage of Liposuction is that the removed fat can be used and transferred to other areas and often times can be placed strategically as a filler on the face.



In addition to Liposuction, leg and buttock contouring can be done non-invasively using a Vela Shape machine. This machine made by Syneron consists of Radio Frequency, Ultrasound heat and infrared light. The heated fat is mobilized into the blood stream by the Ultrasound and Massaging Techniques of the machine. The draw back to Vela Shape is that it requires approximately five treatments spaced at three week intervals and does require one to two touchup treatments per year. However, for those specific patients who do not require Liposuction and who are looking for a body sculpting and contouring effect, Vela Shape may be perfect for them.

Another area of concern in women, especially around the buttock and thigh, is cellulite.

Cellulite is basically a hardening of the skin causing "Fibrosis." The exact etiology of this is unclear, but it is felt to have a congenital component and is due to thickening of the skin and subcutaneous tissue in certain areas resulting in an irregular cottage cheese appearance. This can occur even in very thin individuals. It is interesting that this rarely occurs in men. There are no ultimate and all-inclusive treatments for cellulite. However, there are many forms of therapy available that can help control this. There is Mesotherapy, which is the injection of multiple solutions into the area. Most of these solutions consist of a fat dissolving substance that can be injected directly into the areas of the cellulite to help shrink them. In addition to that the Vela Shape machine does help to lessen the appearance of the cellulite. There is also a form of therapy called "Carboxy Therapy" where carbon dioxide is injected into the cellulite to help shrink this. Unfortunately, with all of cellulite there is no single treatment that will resolve it.



To have perfect legs is a gift of only a precious few. However, the methods used to try to achieve individual goals and to approach the attainment of perfect legs is available to all of us.

Dr. John P. Landi, MD, FACS is a fellowship trained Vascular Surgeon. He is Medical Director of Vanish Vein and Laser Center, a state of the art Vein Center dedicated to the complete eradication of veins. It has been in Naples for over eight years. In addition to Vanish Vein and Laser Center, Dr. Landi is also Medical Director of LaBella Mia Med Spa, a state of the art Medical Esthetic Spa. All treatments mentioned in this article are available at the Spa. For more information please call (239) 403-0800 or visit the web site at www.vanishvein.com.

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