

EVA LONGORIA *On why the 42-year-old will try anything and everything when it comes to beauty* WRINKLE REVOLUTION *10 surprising things you can do right now to make a big difference in how you will age*

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These treatments are the finishing touch to make your body look that much better.

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THE PROBLEM:

Loose skin on your stomach

THE FIX: A tummy tuck

How it works: Extra skin accumulates on the stomach because weight gain in this area forces the skin to stretch. However, the only way to eliminate it for good is by excising it. A tummy tuck addresses loose skin while also correcting stretched-out muscles and tissue. While there are variations of the procedure (a mini-tummy tuck removes less skin and concentrates on the area below the belly button, and an extended tummy tuck addresses more loose skin than the traditional procedure), the goal is removing unnecessary skin. "We can see dramatic results in women who have had full-term pregnancies because the skin quality is often good in these patients," says Voorhees, NJ, plastic surgeon William Franckle, MD.

What else you need to know: There will be a scar that runs from hip to hip (mini-tummy tucks result in a smaller scar) that is usually hidden in bathing suits. "In some patients, scars start out red or dark. However, most will fade for up to three or four years and can become almost invisible with time and proper care," says Dr. Lane Smith. Some plastic surgeons perform drainless tummy tucks, which use a surgical adhesive to create less space between the skin and tissues so fluid isn't accumulated.

The results: While you can see an instant change, you will be swollen after surgery, which can take a few months to resolve. At about the six-month mark, you'll have a good sense of what your stomach will look like, but it can take up to one year for the final results to set in.



Charlotte, NC, plastic surgeon J. Garrett Harper, MD, performed a tummy tuck to remove this patient's excess skin after massive weight loss.



Great Neck, NY, dermatologist Kally Papantoniou, MD, used Ultherapy to tighten this patient's loose, crepey skin on her neck.

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THE PROBLEM:

Minimally loose skin

THE FIX: A skin tightener

How it works: Going by the brand names of Pellevé, Thermage FLX System and Ultherapy, these devices use radio-frequency and/or ultrasound energy to stimulate collagen and tighten skin from the inside out. Dr. Bengtson says smaller areas of mild excess skin may be amenable to nonsurgical or minimally invasive skin-tightening methods, but these treatments can't help larger amounts of extra skin. "For example, if the loose skin is on the stomach, it is common to remove 10 to 12 inches of skin across the entire abdomen—there is no nonsurgical technology that will ever tighten that much skin," he adds. "It's unlikely that more than an inch or two of

skin can be tightened nonsurgically, even with aggressive treatment." When a patient needs more skin tightening than this, the skin must be surgically excised.

What else you need to know: Not only are multiple treatments needed, as well as regular maintenance, but most doctors feel like they can only offer improvement to those who are young and only have a small amount of sagging. Some areas of the body respond better to skin-tightening treatments than others. "In the abdomen, skin tightening is more for fine skin contour irregularities versus true skin excess," says Dr. Bengtson.

The results: After a series of treatments—four to six—skin will start to appear firmer. Most patients will see a difference in their skin around the four-week mark, but results are not predictable like with surgery.

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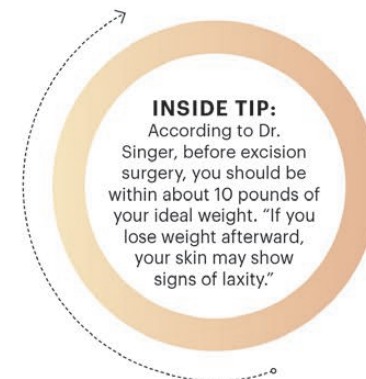
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INSIDE TIP:

According to Dr. Singer, before excision surgery, you should be within about 10 pounds of your ideal weight. "If you lose weight afterward, your skin may show signs of laxity."

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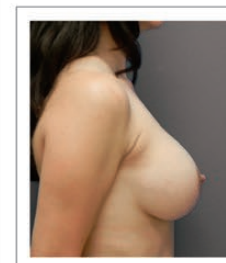
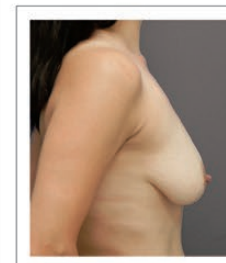
THE PROBLEM: Lifeless breasts

THE FIX: A breast lift (with or without implants)

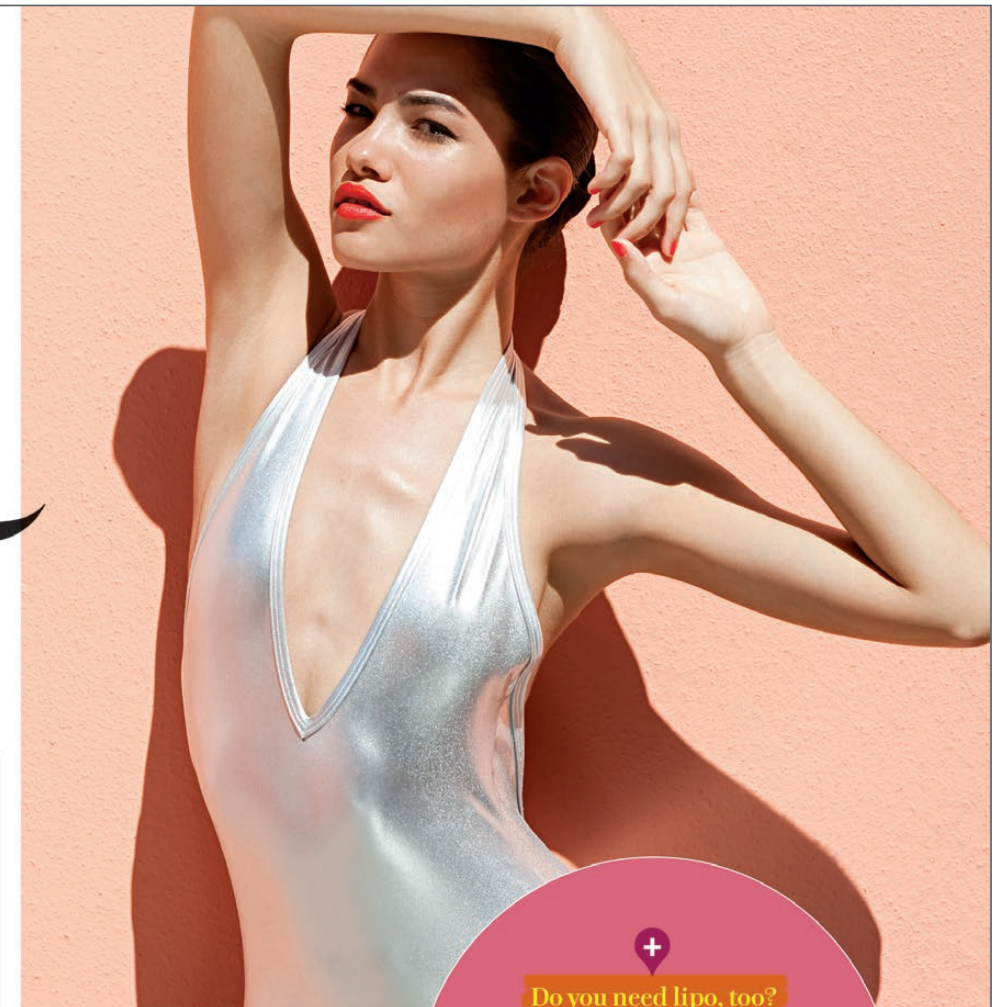
How it works: The breasts are made up of fat, tissue and muscle, so it makes perfect sense that a loss of fat all over the body will affect their look, shape and size. "Most women who lose weight also lose volume in their breasts and elasticity in their skin, so their breasts droop," says Dr. Singer. "If that happens, they may need to be lifted into a better position." If necessary, the areolas can be made smaller and the nipples can be moved to a higher position, too.

What else you need to know: Lifting the breasts requires the use of one of three incisions, depending on how much laxity there is. With significant sagging, an incision is made around the areola, down the breast and in the breast crease to remove the skin. For moderate sagging, a lollipop incision can be used, which goes around the areola and down the breast vertically. If there is minimal drooping and loose skin, and the internal tissues don't need to be addressed, sometimes an incision can be made just around the areola to restore the shape and position of the breasts. "Because weight loss can often affect the size of the breasts too, many patients request an augmentation in addition to the lift," says Dr. Singer.

The results: At first, your breasts may seem higher than you thought they'd be, but there's no need to worry. They need to settle, especially if implants were used. Two to three months after surgery is generally the time it takes to see their actual shape and position take hold.



Kirkland, WA, plastic surgeon Sarah E. McMillan, MD, performed a breast lift with implants to restore this patient's breasts.



Do you need lipo, too?

Just because you lost weight, doesn't mean you might not have hard-to-erase bulges that won't go away. In fact, every doctor we spoke to for this story said that most skin-excision procedures also include the use of liposuction to maximize the results. "Along with surgical skin excision, I use liposuction to blend areas and smooth contours in those who have lost a massive amount of weight. It makes the difference between a good result and a great one," says Dr. Franckle.



How soon should you have surgery?

Most plastic surgeons will recommend waiting at least six months, if not longer, after you have hit your goal weight before considering any type of plastic surgery. This way, you can make sure you are able to maintain your new weight without gaining what was just lost. If the weight is easily put back on, it can dramatically compromise your results.