

Body and face: non-surgical skin tightening

Our weight goes up and down depending on diet and exercise, but as we age (or after childbirth), one thing that doesn't yo-yo any more is our skin. Sadly, it just doesn't bounce back as well as it once did. The result: wobbly, loose skin on both the face and body; cellulite; lines and wrinkles. You could turn into the Duracell version of a gym bunny to burn calories and maintain muscle tone, but if you don't address saggy skin you still won't have the face or figure you crave. But, don't panic! Non-surgical skin tightening is the 'lift' you need.

Most people have now heard of non-invasive treatments that offer low risk and more cost-effective alternatives to cosmetic surgery without downtime, e.g. the 'lift in your lunch hour' sales pitches. So why haven't you tried it? My theory is that people are still not sure what's involved, how it works, or how good the results can be. This doesn't surprise me. So many salons and clinics are pushing different 'wonder machines' and treatments, consumers still don't really know what it is or if it's just a lot of hype. I can tell you it isn't. The results we see on our clients are astounding. But, as always, not all skin-tightening procedures are born equal and they have to be in the right hands to produce the optimum results.

As experts in non-invasive skin tightening and wrinkle reduction, Serenity Clinic Ltd was one of only two clinics listed in a review of the Venus Legacy procedure in *The Sunday Times* in September 2017* – we know a thing or two about it. So, here are my skin-tightening FAQs:

What's involved in the treatment?

Most of the non-surgical or non-invasive treatments advertised use equipment to tighten skin and reduce wrinkles. These use handpieces connected to a machine, which are applied to the area to be treated. However, although the equipment may look similar, they use different methods and technologies. For example, some use ultrasound, some radio frequency, some intense pulsed light (IPL), HIFU, etc., others use the microcurrent Baxendale wave, infra-red, electromagnetic pulses and so on. In addition there are manual treatments such as specialist facials, massage, dermal fillers and clinical products, etc., that can be used in conjunction with mechanical procedures for optimum results.

So, which method is the best?

The answer is... all of the above. It all depends on a number of factors:

- i) The area being treated, i.e. face, neck, jaw, or body.
- ii) The plain truth is there is no single miracle machine or treatment. That's why I'd always advise caution when a therapist only offers one type of treatment as a 'cure-all'. It's also why we have more than 22 machine-based treatments at Serenity Clinic, which we use in combination to achieve the optimum outcome for each client.
- iii) The technology and machinery now available is great. But the results will only be as good as the person operating it. So, check your aesthetician's qualifications and experience. Don't be afraid to ask to see genuine 'before and after' photos of their own work.

How does it work?

Different technologies work in different ways. But, in a nutshell, the waves penetrate into the deeper dermis to stimulate fibroblast and collagen production. The natural production of these slows as we age, resulting in loss of volume, skin laxity and wrinkles. By stimulating production, the skin becomes plumper and more elastic again and is smoothed and lifted.



Image for illustrative purposes only

Does it hurt?

Equipment-based methods such as Venus, 3D, HIFU and microcurrent procedures are pain-free. You may feel some warmth/heat from the handpiece and the area may be slightly red after treatment, but this will last no more than a few hours. Manual treatments can cause some mild discomfort, but once again this should be temporary and your aesthetician should discuss this at a consultation.

What areas can be tightened?

Far more than you think:

Face: Wrinkles on the forehead, face, crow's feet, laughter lines, etc.

Eyes: Drooping lids (top and bottom)

Jaw and neck: Sagging jowls and jawline, crêpe neck, décolletage. Redefined and firmed.

Arms: Loose or hanging skin on the backs of arms and elbows

Tum and bum: Sagging skin due to age, childbirth, weight fluctuations. Lifted and firmed.

Legs: Loose or cellulite-dimpled skin on the front and back of thighs, knee area. Smoothed and defined.

How many sessions will I need?

You will see results even after your first treatment. But the exact number of sessions will depend on your specific needs, the level of laxity/tightening required and also the area being treated. In general though, approximately 6 to 8 sessions followed by top-up sessions is the norm.

* *The Sunday Times Magazine* 17th September 2017. "Say yes to... Venus Legacy"

Tracey Locke, Lead Clinician



Serenity Clinic Ltd, 162 Banks Road,
West Kirby, Wirral CH48 0RH
T: 0151 625 6256
www.serenity-clinic.co.uk