Non-Surgical Fat Removal: What Works

Karol A Gutowski, MD, FACS
Private Practice
University of Illinois & University of Chicago
Disclosures

Merz
Syneron/Candela

May use brand names due to lack of distinguishing generic names
What do You Mean by “Works”

• Clinically proven* significant fat reduction
• Clinically reported fat reduction
• “Me too” technology based on other devices

• Does in work on my patients?
• Does it work in my practice?
• Does it work for my practice?

• Will I recoup my investment or see an ROI?

*Multiple peer reviewed publications
Does it Work on My Patients?

• How are you positioning the results?
• Accept modest results after many treatments?
• Will patients still trust you if it doesn’t work?
• Will they consider liposuction as a back up?
  – Will you discount the liposuction?
• Will you give refunds?
• How will you handle unfavorable reviews?
Does it Work in My Practice?

- Will staff promote it?
  - Did staff try it?
- Who will take ownership?
- Will I need additional staff?
- Who will do marketing?
- Additional space?
Does it Work For My Practice?

• Will I be doing it or can I delegate it?
• Additional costs & overhead?
  – Annual maintenance, service, disposables, etc
• Will it bring in NEW patients?
  – Will existing patients shift their dollars?
• Will it bring in SURGERY patients?
Grow the Pie or Re-Slice the Pie?

- Grow your practice or just change it
- Patients may have a fixed budget for services
- Need to bring in NEW patients
Grow the Pie or Re-Slice the Pie?

- Grow your practice or just change it
- Patients may have a fixed budget for services
- Need to bring in NEW patients

Total $100K

- Surgical $70K
- Nonsurgical $20K
- Product Sales $10K
Grow the Pie or Re-Slice the Pie?

- Grow your practice or just change it
- Patients may have a fixed budget for services
- Need to bring in NEW patients

![Pie chart showing various revenue streams: Nonsurgical $20K, Surgical $70K, New Device $20K, Product Sales $10K, + Device Payments $50K, Total $100K.]

---

**Total $100K**

- Nonsurgical: $20K
- Surgical: $70K
- New Device: $20K
- Product Sales: $10K
- + Device Payments: $50K

---
Grow the Pie or Re-Slice the Pie?

- Grow your practice or just change it
- Patients may have a fixed budget for services
- Need to bring in NEW patients

- **Total $100K**
  - Surgical: $70K
  - Nonsurgical: $20K
  - Product Sales: $10K

- **New Device** $20K

- **Total $100K**
  - Surgical: $75K
  - Nonsurgical: $30K
  - Product Sales: $15K

- **Pay off device**
  - Total $150K
  - New Device: $30K

- **Re-Slice**

- **Grow**
Considerations

Your device needs depend on
• What you offer vs what you want to offer/expand
• Practice model
  – Academics
  – Employed
  – Small group
  – Solo
• Geographic location
• Patient demographics
• Patient demand – Real vs Generated
• Budget with limited resources
How Will You Get Suckered Into This?

- FOMO - “Everyone is doing it”
- Industry “Cosmetic Summit” at luxury hotel
- Unrealistic proforma by sales team
- Patients are “asking for it”
- Dr Oz gave it thumbs up
- The KOL pitch/deal

This is all coordinated by industry
Revenue per Hour

• **You** can make high profit per hour injecting
  – Neuromodulators take 10 min
  – Patients keep coming back
  – May convert to surgery

• **You** make more per hour in surgery
  – But has more non-compensated time
  – Patients don’t come back for years

• **You** may NOT make money using machines
  – Your **staff** can make you money using machines
  – May convert to surgery
Local Market Issues

• Underserved or saturated?

• Ride someone else’s marketing wave?

• Losing patients to other providers?
Non-Surgical Fat Reduction Options?

- Chemical
- Radio Frequency
  - Combined with Infra Red
- Laser
- Ultrasound
- Cryolipolysis
- Electromagnetic
Deoxycholate (Kybella)
- Expensive per treatment
- Minimal practice investment
- Best for small areas
- Typically 2 to 3 rounds

- I can do better with liposuction at less cost
Radio Frequency

- Thermage, Exilis, TruSculpt, Venus, others
  - Monopolar
  - Bipolar
  - Multipolar
- Additional features (of questionable value)
  - Vacuum, Infrared, Pulsed magnetic fields
Surface RF Fat Reduction & Skin Tightening

- Multiple sessions
  - 2 to 4 weeks apart
- Operator dependent
  - Dedicated staff
- Better for small areas
  - Easier to see improvement
- Useful for touch up after liposuction
  - Add skin tightening
Field RF Fat Reduction & Skin Tightening

- Vanquish
- Multiple sessions
- Set & forget
  - Minimal skill level
Internal RF Fat Reduction & Skin Tightening

- Micro-Needling RF
- Fewer sessions
- Much more operator dependent
  - Dedicated staff
  - Advanced practice
  - Analgesia
- Time intensive
Deep RF (Thermi)

Don’t listen to me

Hear it from the Expert
Non-Invasive Laser Fat Reduction

- iLipo
- Xerona
- SculpSure

- Poor or inconsistent results
SculpSure Class Action Law Suit

Cynosure Inc. SculpSure

DEFENDANT NAME: Cynosure Inc.
PRACTICE AREA: Consumer Rights
STATUS: Active
DATE FILED: 06/16/17

KEY ATTORNEYS:
Steve W. Berman
Elizabeth A. Fegan
Mark Vazquez

SculpSure = Torture Device

 Treatments  >  SculpSure  >  Reviews  >  SculpSure = Torture Device

Efeucht  Not Worth It  $6,500
Focused Ultrasound

- **Liposonix**
  - Consumable costs
  - Painful

- **Ulthera**
  - Operator dependent
  - Consumable costs
  - Painful
  - Better for facial skin tightening
Electromagnetic

- Emsculpt
  - High Intensity Focused Electromagnetic Technology
- Fat reduction + muscle hypertrophy
- 4 initial treatments then 1 touch up every 3 months
  - 20,000 forced muscle contractions per 30 min session
- Ideal patients seem to be thin and fit to start
Emsculpt

Before Treatment

After 2 months
Emsculpt

Before Treatment

After 2 months
Cryolipolysis

• Probably the most predictable results
• Backed by many peer reviewed studies
• Change in business model
  – Direct to consumer advertising
  – Brings in NEW patients
• “Set & Forget”
Personal Experience with CoolSculpting

- 4 machines at 3 affiliated medspa locations
- DTC marketing is working
- Brings in patients who would never consider seeing a plastic surgeon
- Some convert to liposuction
- Some convert to excisional procedures

- If I could buy only one body contouring machine, this is it
Paradoxical Adipose Hyperplasia

- Fat overgrowth in treated area
- Less than 1 in 1000
- 2 to 3 months after treatment
- Does not resolve
- Responds to liposuction
My Best Results: Which Device did I use?

Before

After
What Does RealSelf Have to Say?

**Zerona**
Average cost: $1,650
141 reviews

**CO2 Laser**
Average cost: $2,650
292 reviews
Non-Surgical Fat Removal: What Works

Karol A Gutowski, MD, FACS
Karol@DrGutowski.com
Presentation Available Next Week
DrGutowski.com -> Click [For Physicians]