

BEAUTY

We review the latest treatments

Say YES to...



A CHIN LIFT

Marisa Meltzer tries a new, non-invasive jaw-tightening procedure. Will it work?



TO QUOTE THE IMMORTAL Nora Ephron, I feel bad about my neck. And my chin. Call it the chin-neck-jowls region, which, on me, resembles not a swan or Helen Mirren, but rather a turkey or perhaps a seal. I've never cried over my chin, but I have untagged myself in any photos on social media showing me in profile. Age, gravity and weight fluctuation being the beasts they are, I have only grown more aware of my double chin since turning 40 last summer. In savasana, at the end of yoga, I have been offered a pillow "to be more comfortable". My chin was loose, fatty and only getting worse.

Ever since I started with a small bit of Botox in my crow's feet four years ago, any fear or hesitation about cosmetic procedures has gone out the window. One injection and the lines were gone, if only for a few months. Then came a tiny bit of filler in the hollows under my eyes, then a laser to get rid of pigment marks

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and give me the skin of a newborn. My chin was the next reasonable target.

I went to Dr Paul Jarrod Frank, a prominent New York City dermatologist with a posh Fifth Avenue address. A full 20% of his clientele come from the UK, perhaps because he sells the goods so well. He's tall, slim and tanned and looks like a gracefully ageing male model. You feel assured he won't send you home looking like a mask of your former self. But he also has a sense of humour: in the hallway there's a large photograph of him looking very dashing and brandishing a filled syringe.

We went over my options. There are fat-freezing procedures such as CoolSculpting, where suction paddles are placed on the area in question and the fat is cooled and crystallised over the course of an hour. Or there's Belkyra (Kybella in the US), or deoxycholic acid, which is injected into the chin and melts away fat. The upside is that neither procedure is invasive. The downside is the results are so subtle that several visits are usually required and there might not be much difference between the before-and-after photos. "They work for a small percentage of people. If you have a teaspoon of fat, you can get away with Belkyra," Frank told me.

For people like me, who have more like a teacup of fat and a genetic propensity to a double chin — I take after my late grandmother in this — he recommends the UltraTight, a treatment that fuses ultrasound technology for tightening the skin with "minimally invasive" liposuction. "It's something I developed specifically for pockets of fat that ruin the contour of the face and neck, but the skin isn't loose enough for a neck lift. I do it several times a week — over a third of my practice is liposuction or fat removal of some kind," he said. Since the procedure is more like getting work done on my teeth than plastic surgery, it's carried out under local anaesthetic.

I booked my appointment for two weeks later. In the meantime I got blood tests done to make sure I was in good health and not pregnant. Once that was out of the way, I showed up at Frank's office on a Friday afternoon. I was his second UltraTight chin of the day. Nurses repeatedly asked if I was nervous — I wasn't — and reminded me I wasn't to drive for 24 hours. I lay down as they put on a disco playlist and numbed the chin and neck, at which point I was in a deep haze.

While I was listening to the Bee Gees, Frank was making incisions under my chin that were so small, they didn't need any stitches. He inserted cannulas the size of a cotton bud to vacuum away the fat. He passed over my chin, neck and into my jowls a few times. I could feel pressure and knew that something was happening, but no pain. The whole thing took about 20 minutes.

Once I got settled into the back of a taxi, I sent my mother a selfie of me with my face wrapped in a sort of chin and neck bra. With a huge pair of Céline sunglasses on, I felt almost glamorous. Back at home, I got into bed

I SENT MY MOTHER A SELFIE OF ME WITH MY FACE WRAPPED IN A CHIN AND NECK BRA

and slept for 16 hours. I took off my chin bra after 24 hours to go out to dinner with friends, neither of whom noticed anything was amiss. "Tell people you've had your wisdom teeth out," Frank had advised if I needed a fib.

In a decade of doing the procedure, he told me, he has never seen a skin infection, never had to touch up any work, never even seen a drop of blood. And my recovery has been similarly seamless. Other than taking antibiotics as a precaution and wearing my

chin bra for 10 days while I sleep, I haven't needed so much as a paracetamol.

Now, a week later, the area in question is still a bit swollen and tender, but I already notice the difference. Just last night an old friend took a couple of photos of the two of us and posted one on Instagram just before we dashed into the theatre. The next morning I saw the one she'd chosen — it featured my head turned, so that my chin, neck and jawline were all on full display. And you know what? I looked great. ■

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WHERE TO GO IN THE UK Dr Maryam Zamani for jaw tightening with Ultherapy (drmaryamzamani.com).

WHAT IS IT? A non-surgical procedure that uses a handheld device to deliver ultrasound energy deep into the skin's structural layers. This prompts the production of collagen and elastin, which in turn shrink-wrap the neck and chin area.

WHO'S IT FOR? Those with a better-than-average pain threshold — the procedure is more than uncomfortable. Candidate-wise, it's suitable for anyone with pronounced jowls that are in need of a 1cm or smaller lift. Surgery is recommended for anything more than 1cm.

HOW LONG DOES IT LAST? The procedure itself takes 60 to 90 minutes, and it takes about two to three months to see the full results. Upkeep is necessary, but follow-ups are booked on a case-by-case basis.

THE DAMAGE From £3,500. Visit global.ultherapy.com to find your nearest clinic.



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