



Renaissance Cosmetic Laser

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Liposuction - Then and Now **by Taek Kim, M.D.**

It was invented in Europe. Today, U.S. doctors and patients are among its greatest advocates.

“It” is liposuction, the number one choice for getting rid of unwanted fat from various areas of the body, and the most commonly performed cosmetic procedure in the U.S.

The process has made tremendous strides since the 1970s when Italian Giorgio Fischer, M.D., and Frenchman Yves-Gerald Illouz, M.D., first experimented with the technique.

Another French doctor, Pierre-Francois Fournier, M.D., is credited with improving the early liposuction techniques in collaboration with Dr. Illouz, and the two became known as liposuction pioneers. It was also Dr. Fournier who introduced what has now become a major segment of the multi-billion dollar industry to the U.S.

The early procedures focused on a dry technique, which were not safe enough to make the technique widely accepted. Enter Jeffrey Klein, M.D., who in 1985 revolutionized liposuction by introducing the tumescent technique.

Despite more advances such as ultrasonic liposuction and laser-assisted liposuction, the procedures continued to have certain drawbacks and inherent risks.

The most significant development came in 2004 when at the annual convention of the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery, a German plastic surgeon, presented a new procedure he had invented: water-assisted liposuction (WAL).

While WAL was performed throughout Europe and Asia, it was not approved by the FDA for use in the U.S. until in the fall of 2008.

The Human Med company in Germany acquired the product and further improved this liposuction machine into the popular version being used today.

Taek Y. Kim, M.D., Medical Director

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The body-jet®* WAL has many advantages over other methods:

- Its unique method of loosening fat for suction by powerful yet gentle water waves is far easier on the connective tissues, blood vessels, nerve fibers and lymphatic drainage system. This results in far less bruising and pain and very minimal blood loss.
- It can be performed while the patient is awake with local anesthesia resulting in minimal discomfort during the procedure as well as the post-operative period.
- This technique allows the surgeon to remove more than 90 percent of the fluid infiltrated during the procedure, thereby reducing Lidocaine local anesthetic toxicity to minimal or none.
- The patient can see the immediate body contouring effects and participate in the final results.
- There is higher patient satisfaction and a faster recovery period, usually 48 hours downtime.
- It's the ideal way to harvest intact viable fat cells for grafting to a patient's face, hands, breast (natural breast augmentation) and buttocks (Brazilian butt lift).

Body-jet WAL liposuction, also referred to as Aqua-Lipo, consists of three phases.

1. Infiltration phase - During this phase, tumescent solution is injected into the subcutaneous fatty laser for anesthesia.
2. Irrigation and suction phase - gentle yet powerful jet stream waves of water detach adipose fat cells for easier suctioning

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3. Drying phase- specially designed cannula remove any leftover fluid in the tissue, which makes immediate contouring possible with minimal tissue swelling.

During the first 48 hours there will be some fluid drainage through the small cannula sites. Most of the patients resume normal activities the following day, even returning to work within two days. They are advised to wear compression garments for continuous contouring and also to minimize post-procedural discomforts.

*body-jet is a registered trademark of human med®

About the Author

Taek Kim, M.D., a renowned cosmetic surgeon in the Chicago area, was the first to train with the inventor of body-jet in Germany in 2005 and the first in the Midwest to perform a body-jet procedure. His experience and ongoing technique perfection set him apart from other liposuction surgeons in Illinois. He was chosen by Human Med in 2009 to train other U.S. doctors in the body-jet procedure.

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