



Dr. Monasterio performs mesotherapy on a patient.

VICTORY OVER CELLULITE?

MESOTHERAPY EXPLAINED

BY DIANA DALTON



Dr. Enrique Monasterio.

Mesotherapy could be a valuable weapon in fighting the battle of the bulge and may revolutionize our concept of body sculpting and weight reduction. Called the latest fat-melting fad, mesotherapy is a half-century-old technique from France that involves hundreds of tiny injections and is touted as a safer alternative to liposuction. A session of mesotherapy involves injecting a customized formula of plant extracts, vitamins, minerals and FDA approved pharmaceutical drugs into the mesoderm, or middle layer of the skin, to “liquefy” the body’s fat cells, which will then be either burned as energy or carried through the bloodstream and excreted.

Mesotherapy was developed in 1952 and has long been popular in Europe where it is used therapeutically— for pain management, sports injuries and arthritis— as well as cosmetically— for cellulite reduction, face and neck rejuvenation and body sculpting. “Mesotherapy has a synergistic effect when combined with a healthy diet and exercise, optimizing your weight reduction plan, the results are outstanding,” states Dr. Enrique Monasterio, M.D., a trained mesotherapist and Medical Director and CEO of MedSpaMiami.

Described as the definitive aesthetic treatment for cellulite, mesotherapy is not for everyone. Dr. Monasterio advises

that mesotherapy is only for patients who are committed to healthy lifestyle changes and committed to weight reduction. While some patients lose up to four inches in circumference in the treatment area, mesotherapy must be combined with proper diet and regular exercise. Unlike liposuction, which removes fat cells, mesotherapy stimulates fat cells to burn fat. If diet and exercise are not maintained the patient can regain weight to the same place.

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So the important question, is it safe? When compared to liposuction, mesotherapy offers a safer, less invasive alternative without the risks or downtime. Liposuction cannot be used in areas with cellulite, and in fact may result in making cellulite more prominent and asymmetrical. There are also the risks associated with undergoing general anesthesia and surgery.

“Liposuction is such a dangerous procedure— even performed by the expert hands of a board certified plastic surgeon,” explains Dr. Monasterio. Alternatively, mesotherapy treats cellulite directly by removing fat from cells in a non-surgical way, resulting in a smoother, refined skin surface. Although the practice of mesotherapy has been around for decades in Europe, because of its recent introduction to the United States in the late 1990s, there are no published scientific studies demonstrating if the effects are permanent, why or if certain ingredients work, or how safe mesotherapy is for patients.

A mesotherapy session takes only 30 minutes, not including patient consultation and observation before and after the procedure, and is performed about once every two weeks. Tiny needles are used, making the procedure virtually pain free. A session runs about \$400, and the number of sessions needed varies greatly depending on the amount of unwanted fat and cellulite involved. Some patients see results after two to three treatments, while others need ten or more. Each treatment plan is designed individually according to a patient’s needs and goals. The injections are also customized, and may include agents that are used to open blood vessels, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, enzymes, nutrients, antibiotics and hormones.

While all pharmaceutical drugs used in the injections are FDA approved, mesotherapy itself is a procedure not yet recognized by the FDA and the drugs used are approved for other uses. Dr. Monasterio cautions that mesotherapy is a medical procedure and patients need to approach it responsibly and carefully. It should only be performed by a physician with the proper credentials and training who provides a full consultation and physical examination prior to any procedure.

“Wellness is the future of medicine,” explains Dr. Monasterio. “It is about healthy people wanting to remain healthy.” A healthy diet, exercise and age-management medicine, which can include hormone replacement therapy, are all parts of the wellness concept. “If you look good, you feel good, there is no question about it!” Dr. Monasterio is a respected physician who trained in France with the leading authority on mesotherapy and is also a member of the French Society of Mesotherapy. He has operated a private practice in Miami for nearly twenty years. ☺