

# Thigh HOPES

As summer looms, Eugenie Kelly wages war on her wobbly bits, living in hope of svelte thighs and a dimple-free bottom.

Ever ripped out a magazine image and smacked it slap-bang centre on the fridge door to help discourage you from hoeing into the leftover brie?

The shot on the opposite page is my current deter-tactic: Ms Rachel Clark, the current face of the Louis Vuitton Cruise collection and Victoria's Secret babe, one of those freakish individuals whose inner thighs don't touch. If you've ever seen the models at a Prada show, you'll be familiar with the species.

Thighs have always been a contentious issue for those women who fall into the "pear shape" category (ever notice how when things go wrong, we say they're pear-shaped?). And it's a gripe that affects even the rich and famous. Take new mum Jessica Alba, who recently revealed in an interview how she detested her Latino curves, wishing instead she were tall and skinny. "I hear people in this industry talking all the time about how Jennifer Lopez is fat. And I know if they're calling her fat, they're saying the same about me." If you think that stings, there's always Paris Hilton's comment that childhood friend Kim Kardashian's butt reminds her of "cottage cheese inside a big trash bag". Nice one.

Even petite Meg Ryan, in a scene from her latest flick *The Women*, declares that her thighs "have been hit by a meteor shower", while trying on ill-fitting lingerie in La Perla's Madison Avenue boutique. If that isn't depressing enough, moments later she comes face to face with her husband's mistress (and *BAZAAR* covergirl), Eva Mendes, looking flawless.

We all know the textbook tips on how to feel good about your body. Swap macchiatos for green tea. Ditch Bollinger for water. And on days you need to really beat the bloat, steer clear of legumes and cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower. But try telling that to the 16-year-old (yes, you read right) receptionist at my hair salon who's taking out a bank loan to fund her next stint of lipo.

Going off the number of new, high-tech fat-obliterating and body-blitzing treatments hitting cosmetic surgeries and day spas, it seems we're all craving a quick fix, even those barely out of school — no gym membership required. Caution: one thing that does get a workout here is your wallet.

Undoubtedly snaring the most media attention is UltraShape — a walk-in, walk-out treatment we recently roadtested at plastic surgeon Dr Mark Kohout's Sydney practice. Basically, after a lengthy consultation, your saddlebags are marked up (could someone please invent a pen that doesn't result in raised eyebrows three days later at your toddler's swimming class?) and you're instructed to lie on a bed with a machine attached. A nurse lubricates your upper legs with castor oil, then the tip of the unit is run over your skin, emitting focused ultrasound waves in a series of pulses to break up fat cells a few centimetres below the skin's surface. No anaesthesia or sedation is required, but the two-hour treatment will prove much more bearable should you pop a few Nurofen Plus prior, as advised. (The ultrasound waves reverberated off my hip bones — the sensation can only be described as that dull, hot throb you experience when jabbed with an injection.) Pain is the price of beauty, I chant through gritted teeth.

The cost, which hovers around the \$1000-mark per treatment (most people need three to four), isn't deterring clients, though results aren't guaranteed. There are so many variables that can affect how many centimetres you shed — diet, exercise and whether your fat is soft or hard (yes, apparently it makes a difference). "It's just a description we give to the way fat looks and behaves," explains Kohout. "The hard fat usually

contains more fibrous tissue than the softer-feeling fat. From experience, it's the fibrous, hard fat that doesn't respond as well to treatment."

A beauty-editor mate in the UK swears she's lost five centimetres from her girth thanks to regular UltraShape treatments. Unfortunately I gave up after two sessions so can't vouch for the same outcome. In UltraShape's defence, my low pain threshold is legendary: during the birth of my second child, the mere memory of my first labour set off such foetal distress, I was whipped in for an emergency cesarean.

While we're on the charming topic of fat excretion, another treatment to catch our eye this month was Formostar (\$95 per session, with eight to 15 treatments recommended). Prepare to sweat buckets — all while lying on a massage bed, watching *Will & Grace*. Silicone body pads are wrapped around your torso, thighs and upper arms, then heated up using infra-red heat to penetrate about 4.5 centimetres below your skin. This boosts blood into areas that have poor circulation and purports to stimulate your metabolism. My therapist at Alkaline (our new favourite detox spa in Sydney's Potts Point, (02) 9332 2500) tells me one session is equivalent to a two-hour workout, burning about 5000 kilojoules. I'm so zonked afterwards, I don't have the energy to argue.

At this point, even the thought of soft-sand runs is starting to sound vaguely appealing ... but then Marcia Kilgore's (of Bliss Spa fame) new snakeskin Fit Flops (\$200) landed in the office. Scrap Bondi! These have a squishy mid-sole so what looks like a flat surface actually feels like an uneven one, meaning your butt, leg and core muscles get more of an intense workout simply by walking. The claim is that your slow-twitch muscles are engaged by about 10 per cent more during each step, so just by donning them, you get more exercise. Still, there's no skirting around the fact it looks like you're wearing a pair of orthopaedic gladiators ...

File under T for Too Hard Basket? When waging war on your wobbly bits, I still believe nothing beats a quality coat of fake tan (see our current favourites on page 168) for an instant self-esteem boost. The right shade has a knack of evening out your skin tone: stretch marks, deathly pallor, cellulite ... all gone. But getting the perfect colour is crucial. Go too tangerine and suddenly those dimply upper thighs resemble an orange. Oh well, look at the bright side. At least you're no longer a pear. ■

## SIX LUXE & LUSCIOUS LEG TREATS:

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1. Elemis Pro-Collagen Radiantly Smooth Body Cream, \$223, 1800 802 036.
  2. This Works Skin Deep Dry Leg Oil, \$80, 1800 007 844.
  3. Devonio Botanica Tropicale De-Aging Mist, \$89, 1800 069 116.
  4. Elizabeth Arden Ceramide Plump Perfect Body Soufflé, \$80, 1800 015 500.
  5. Dior Capture Totale Haute Nutrition Multi-Perfection Refirming Body Concentrate, \$230, (02) 9695 4800.
  6. Elle Macpherson Bare Ultimate Moisture Body Butter, \$24, (02) 9663 4277.