

*Diane Hughes*

47, database manager for an international law firm

*“I was hypnotised and had an imaginary gastric band operation”*

# NUDE

*Need some inspiration to brave summer's skimpier outfits? Look no further than our three brave 'guinea pigs', who, having shed unwanted weight (without counting a single calorie) celebrate by shedding their clothes, too*

PHOTOGRAPHS LANCTON  
WORDS EVE CAMERON

# & IMPROVED!

*Caron Darwood*

43, executive coach

*“Shaking up my exercise routine changed my body shape”*

CONTINUED OVER PAGE →

Brenda Holman

64, medical secretary

*I had my tummy fat melted away with ultrasound*



'DESPITE HAVING THREE CHILDREN, I've always been slim. Genetics play a part, but I'm also a very active person and don't sit still for long. I've never done formal exercise although I swim and cycle sometimes in the summer.

In the past 10 years, though, I noticed that extra weight had settled around my middle. I was wary of going on a diet at my age as I think if you lose fat from your face you can look gaunt and older. With dieting you can't choose where you lose it either, and I only wanted to lose my tummy fat. That's why Liposonix sounded ideal, as it targets stomach fat without surgery and I hoped to get results without too much effort!

The procedure itself took about an hour. There was gas and air on offer in case I needed something to soothe the pain, but I didn't find it painful. It was uncomfortable though. The head of the machine, which is passed over your tummy in small areas marked out in a grid, feels like a hot iron left on your skin a little longer than you would like. I just gritted my teeth for those few seconds. Afterwards my stomach felt warm, a little as though I'd been in the sun too long, but I wasn't incapacitated in any way. I was bruised, too, for a couple of weeks.

It took a month to really see that the skin texture on my stomach was noticeably smoother and tighter. My clothes also felt a bit looser

and I started getting compliments from my husband, friends and colleagues. After 12 weeks I could see a real difference, as I'd lost the best part of a stone in weight and nearly 10cm from the two measurements taken above and below my belly button. As long as I don't pile loads of weight on, the results will last. It's expensive but I think it's worth it because it really does work and is not just some gimmicky treatment for the rich and famous.

I didn't like my tummy bulge and now feel less self-conscious in clothes – and out of them, too! I'd never have done this naked photo shoot before the treatment. It's given me a huge confidence boost.'

### Could Liposonix be for you?

Using high-intensity ultrasound to penetrate the deep fatty tissue, Liposonix destroys fat cells but without damaging the cells or tissue outside of the treatment area.

It's a one-off treatment – many other non-invasive techniques require a number of visits to see results. Prices start around £1,500, although this varies on the size of the area treated. Vicki Smith of Absolute Aesthetics (01483 477189; [www.absoluteaesthetics.co.uk](http://www.absoluteaesthetics.co.uk)), where Brenda had her treatment, says: 'Liposonix is best for those with a stubborn bulge of fat that can't be shifted through exercise and diet. We also take a full medical history before offering the treatment.'

### Freeze your fat away!

Another new non-surgical treatment that's creating quite a buzz is Coolsculpting by Zeltiq, which involves freezing fat cells to kill them off – fat is more vulnerable to cold than surrounding cells. The body then naturally disposes of the fat cells in the weeks and months after treatment. Like Liposonix, it's not for the very overweight and it's expensive (also around £1,500 for the tummy), but has good science behind it, and it works. Our tester had her tummy treated at The Cranley Clinic (020 7499 3223) and was thrilled with the result. 'My tummy is flatter, tauter and I have lost several centimetres.'

GH loves the **SHAPE YOU'RE IN**

Diane Hughes

47, database manager for an international law firm

'HAVING BEEN SLIM in my 20s, I started putting on weight through my 30s and 40s. But everything came to a head in October 2009. I was my heaviest ever, 11 stone 5 pounds, and a size 14 to 16. I was also finally diagnosed as having coeliac disease, a condition where gluten, the protein in wheat and other cereals, triggers an immune reaction. I'd been told it was IBS in my 20s, but this development meant I had to avoid certain foods.

Around the same time, I met therapists Martin and Marion Shirran and decided to sign up for their Gastric Mind Band Method, which uses hypnosis and other mind techniques to help you lose weight. The combination of hypnotherapy, Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) accesses your subconscious to help you make changes according to the underlying causes of your being overweight. I hate exercise, had been following low-carbohydrate diets without any real success and was scared of surgery, so it sounded easy!

In March 2010 I flew to Spain for the four-day treatment. The first session, which lasted four hours, included hypnotherapy and explored my background and my relationship with food. It also pinpointed unhealthy habits. I hadn't really considered, for example, that my cup of tea, with three heaped teaspoons of sugar and two sweeteners, could increase my risk of diabetes and heart disease.

The second three-hour session left me feeling exhilarated at the changes I could now make – such as having smaller portion sizes, ditching the convenience foods and cooking more healthily with fresh ingredients. I felt I had a new attitude to food and was incredibly positive. Session three was really intense and emotional and took me back to my childhood. I don't remember much about what happened, but I cried a lot.

In the final session, I had the imaginary op. I was shown a real gastric band and talked through the procedure of having it fitted. Then I watched a DVD of a very gory gastric band operation before I was hypnotised. Marian pricked my hand with [CONTINUED OVER PAGE]



[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE] something sharp, which was meant to feel like anaesthetic being administered! In my deeply relaxed state I could hear sounds of the operating theatre, the bleeping of machines and caught occasional wafts of clinical smells. Marian's soothing voice was saying things like 'you won't eat if you're not hungry' and 'you will want to eat healthily' I could also feel my stomach tightening!

Now, just over a year later, my BMI has fallen from 27 to 22 and I have lost two stone, going down to 9½ stone. I've changed the way I eat, but it hasn't been a struggle. Originally I didn't think the imaginary gastric band would play much of a role, but I do feel fuller quicker and my portion sizes have shrunk, which I can only put down to the band. I've also learned to let myself feel hungry before eating and I eat slowly, chewing every mouthful to give myself a chance to feel full. I have cut down on sweet things, my weakness, but I haven't denied myself completely. I try to be more active and climb the 100 stairs at work rather than taking the lift. I was given lots of literature on nutrition and also some of the Shirrans' CDs that help reinforce the treatment.

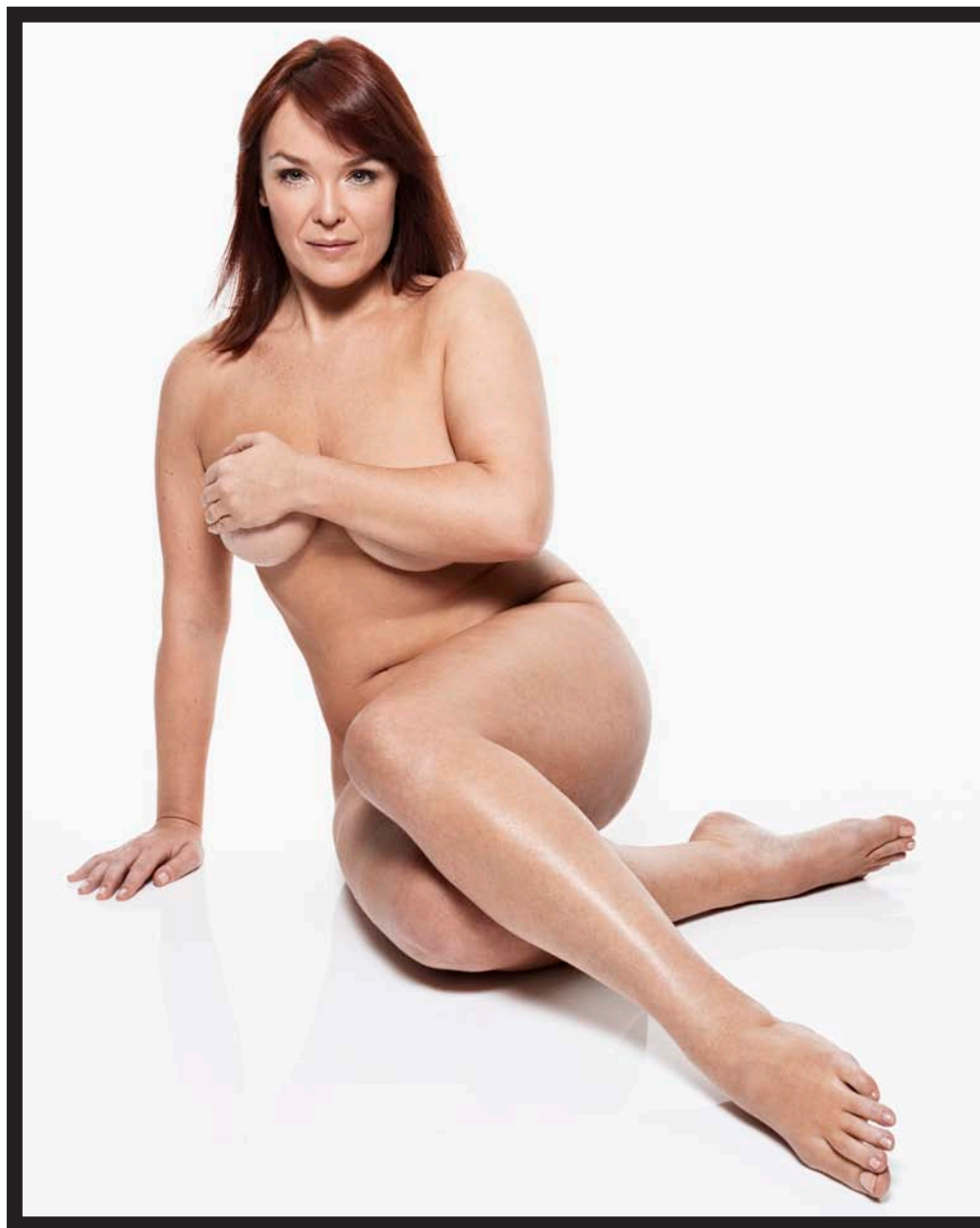
I've got so much more confidence now and it's lovely being a size 10 again. I'd recommend the treatment to anyone. It's amazing what the power of the mind can do.'

### Mind over matter

The Gastric Mind Band treatment is available at The Elite Clinic in Spain and is €1,495.

For details call 00 34 951 311 591, email [mail@gmband.com](mailto:mail@gmband.com) or visit [www.gmband.com](http://www.gmband.com).

Alternatively, buy Shirrans' Solution, The Gastric Mind Band by Martin and Marion Shirran with Fiona Graham, £12.50, which has some great tips and advice based on their treatment methods.



### *Is stress making you fat?*

Another way your mind can affect your body is via prolonged stress. Bursts of stress are fine, but chronic stress is ageing and can also lead to coping mechanisms, such as drinking and comfort eating, which pile on the pounds (and don't address the cause of your stress). Also, the stress hormone, cortisol, stimulates the pancreas to produce more insulin, which can lead to weight gain and food cravings. As well as seeking stress-busting solutions (yoga works for many women), you could try a supplement. Magnolia Phellodendron Complex, £23.50, ([www.victoriahealth.com](http://www.victoriahealth.com)), helps control stress-related eating and drinking, relaxes muscles and helps you sleep. In clinical tests, eight out of 10 people had a good night's rest using it. Magnolia extracts may also help to eliminate excess cortisol from the body.

### *Caron Darwood*

43, executive coach

**I WAS ALWAYS FAIRLY SLENDER** in my 20s and a size 10 to 12. When I hit my 30s, the weight started to creep up by a couple of pounds each year. By the age of 41, I'd reached 12 stone 8 pounds and was a size 14-16. One of the reasons I piled on the pounds was because I loved to cook and would eat the same sized portions as my husband, Alistair. For years I'd been a regular exerciser, doing choreographed classes at my local gym. I'd also have personal training sessions when I could afford it. Sometimes, though, I'd be working seven days a week, so I couldn't do more than one or two exercise sessions.

A few years ago when the recession hit, I had a lot less work and much more time on my hands. With less money, I didn't want to spend that time shopping, so went to the gym instead and had some sessions with a new personal trainer. He talked about how my [CONTINUED OVER PAGE]

[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE] metabolism would increase if I were to do weight training sessions. I remember the thing that really resonated with me was when he said my usual routine was just maintenance, keeping me where I was, but not improving or changing my body shape and fitness level. So I started going to the gym five or six times a week, still doing two of the aerobic classes that I loved and adding in four weight-training sessions, too. They split into two leg sessions; one chest and back; and one shoulders, arms and abs. Each lasted about 45 minutes.

When work picked up again I wanted to keep up my new exercise routine, so scheduled my gym sessions in like any other appointment. Going after work, no matter how tired I may feel, has become a habit. At the weekends,

Alistair and I go to the gym together, too.

I'm also focusing on my diet a little more. I haven't cut anything out, but try to control portion sizes and limit my alcohol intake to weekends only. In combination with my exercise routine, this should help me achieve my goal of less body fat and more definition and tone.

It took around 10 months to lose nearly two stone and drop two dress sizes. It feels fantastic to be under 11 stone again and to fit into everything in my wardrobe – apart from things that are too big! I am really happy with the way I look now and feel sexier and better in myself, though I'd like to tone up some more. Exercise is part of my life now.'



## GH SAYS...

*Get trim – the easy way*

✿ **Keep a food diary.** Sometimes there's a difference between what you think you're eating and what you're really putting in your mouth.

✿ **Don't yo-yo or crash diet.** Consistent lifestyle changes are the key to permanent weight loss.

✿ **Check your portion sizes.** Plates piled high, even with healthy foods, will pile on the pounds. A protein portion, for example, should be no bigger than the size of an iPhone.

✿ **Eat slowly,** chewing every mouthful, allowing yourself to start feeling full rather than bolting food down and going for seconds.

✿ **Don't cut out food groups,** unless you have a medical reason not to eat them. Aim for a mix of everything – just keep fats, sugar, and white, refined carbohydrates to a minimum.

## GET MOVING *Make every step count...*

◆ Pushed for time? Power Plate machines (they vibrate, making your muscles contract faster, which means a great workout in less time) are widely available in gyms and even some department stores nationwide. The latest Power Plate workout, Beat The Muffin Top, takes 25 minutes. Don't be fooled into thinking you just stand there, though – this class uses a variety of dynamic exercises to work your core muscles, raise your heart rate and burn fat. It's hard work, but Power Plate has lots of research behind it and, as well as proven toning benefits, using the machines has been shown to reduce cellulite, increase bone mineral density and reduce visceral fat (the dangerous stuff around your organs that you can't see). To find your nearest

class, visit [www.powerplate.com/uk](http://www.powerplate.com/uk) or call 020 7893 8518.

◆ If you want to really blast cellulite, combine Power Plate with wearing Lipo Contour Elite capri-length leggings, £97.78, or shorts, £79.95. Using heat, massage and pressure, these garments speed up fat loss and help reduce that dimply button-backed sofa look. Power Plate is running bottom and thigh targeting classes using the leggings and shorts over the summer, or you could just wear them as you go about your daily activities. For more information, visit [www.lipocontour.co.uk](http://www.lipocontour.co.uk).

◆ Absolute beginner? As long as you are not obese and don't have medical complications (in which case see your GP first) just get walking. A brisk 15 to 20-minute walk every

other day is a great start, says personal trainer and fitness pro Sarah Maxwell ([www.sarahmaxwell.co.uk](http://www.sarahmaxwell.co.uk)). Then build up to longer, faster daily walks. Everyone has time constraints, she says, so anywhere between 20 and 60 minutes is fine. 'If you can't do it all at once, break it up into two sessions, morning and evening.'

You can then start to build in other at-home exercise, too. Sarah suggests a dancing session to your favourite music or buying some fitness DVDs with a friend and doing them together. If you have an Xbox, look out for the game *Your Shape Fitness Evolved*, £39.99 ([www.ubisoft.com](http://www.ubisoft.com)), to use with Xbox's new camera system, Kinect (it scans your body, works out a routine for you and puts you in the workout on screen). □