



Fab abs, conditions apply

Washboard abs have been spotted on everyone from Kareena Kapoor to Priyanka Chopra, and Shilpa Shetty's midsection has caused many a woman to go green with envy. Hrithik Roshan and John Abraham, too, have contributed to making six-packs the most coveted 'accessory'. Getting them isn't easy and no matter how many crunches you do, the loose skin and fat refuses to budge. Enter abdominal etching, a quick fix to a sterling six-pack—or is it?

Why: You might have spent months trying to get those taut, defined abs, but the obstinate layer of fat refuses to budge. Abdominal etching helps you carry off those super-low rise jeans by giving you toned abs. The procedure takes off excess fat from the tummy and sculpts it to create the washboard look.

Worst-case scenario

An untrained person could mess up and draw the lines at the wrong place (in which case, there is no solution) or the grooves may not be well-defined (you'd have to go in for a redo). The cuts could also get infected and start 'leaking'.

The swelling post-liposuction lasts two to five weeks. While you can't exercise immediately, lying around is not a good idea either, as it can lead to complications such as lung infection, urinary tract infection and clots.

Why not: If you don't follow the diet and exercise routine, those six-packs might never show up even after the etching. Plus, the procedure can only be done on people who are within a certain weight zone and works best on gym regulars.

If you must: Only go to a trained certified professional. Be prepared for the lifestyle and dietary changes and the strenuous workout regimen that are part of the deal.

Aftercare: If you go for liposuction, be prepared to endure the swelling that lasts two to five weeks. You have to wear a corset all the time for the first five days, after which you have to wear it for another four to six weeks, but can take it off during baths, etc. While you can't exercise immediately, lying around is not a good idea either, as it can cause complications like lung infections, urinary tract infections and clots. After 10 to 12 days you can start the treadmill, but intensive exercise can only begin after four to six weeks.

You can get a sexy flat tummy with abdominal etching, an invasive procedure. But get off that strict diet and exercise regimen and it's money down the drain, says **Anjali Samanta**

Expert speak: Stay away from laser lipo and ultrasound fat removal, as they can lead to burns, says Dr Mohan Thomas, Mumbai-based cosmetic surgeon. A thorough medical check is a must before the surgery, including a heart and lung function test and Doppler scan of the legs. If you only want to remove pockets of fat, then injection lipolysis with radio frequency skin tightening should work, says Dr Jaishree Sharad, Mumbai-based cosmetic dermatologist. But it's a long process and must be accompanied by exercise and proper diet.

Cost: ₹75,000 upwards (liposuction)

Marketing lie: That you will have that sexy tummy as soon as the bandages come off. Keep in mind that this is not a weight-loss procedure. Plus, the definition only shows after three to four months, says Dr KM Kapoor, Delhi-based cosmetic surgeon. •