



Dr Mohan Thomas, M.D (USA) FACS (USA), leading Cosmetic Surgeon, Visiting Scholar-Mt Sinai Hospital (New York) and Consultant, Breach Candy Hospital, Mumbai

How do I get rid of these marks either using a cream or exercise? I have already started going to the gym and am using the treadmill and steppers. But as of now, there has been no improvement.

ANJALI GUPTA

A You have done well in losing excess weight. The stretch marks are actually not a result of losing weight. This happens when the skin expands during weight gain and becomes very obvious after losing weight.

Unfortunately, these marks cannot be removed permanently. The best option is to hide them with camouflage make-up. Sweat and waterproof make-up that covers up the marks would be ideal.

Q I'm a 30-year-old woman and had breast augmentation done before marriage. Now, after breast-feeding, the shape of my breasts have changed. They have sagged below the implants. Can this be corrected? Would this require a change or removal of the breast implants?

A From what you have described, it seems that your implants were placed below the chest muscle. Due to this placement, the implants have maintained their

original position, whereas the breast tissue has sagged. This can happen sometimes and is not a fault of the previous surgery. Your problem can be corrected by a breast lift without changing the implant, if it is beneath the muscle. If the sagging is mild to moderate, the lift can be achieved through a minimal scar technique.

ANITA MALHOTRA, RAJASTHAN

Q I am 52 years old and my eyebrows are very thin as the hair is sparse. I have been applying eyeliner to darken my brows. Is there a permanent way of correcting this?

BHARATI NAYAR

A The surgical solution to your problem would be to have a hair transplant in the eyebrow area. However, the hair transplanted to the eyebrows do not always look natural, as eyebrow hair is very different in length and direction from hair on the scalp.

A good non-surgical option would be to tattoo the area, which, when done by experts, can really fool the eye and simulate a 'brow'.

Q I am 35 years old and extremely overweight. I have been trying to lose weight for almost two years now. I did lose some weight, but regained it.

Recently, someone

suggested a surgery with which I can lose weight gradually, over a year-and-a-half or so. I do not remember the exact name of the surgery. They said it is some kind of laser surgery that will help in reducing my food intake and dissolve the excess fat in the body. I want to know if such surgeries are really helpful and if there are any side effects. Should I undergo this or any other type of weight reduction surgery or treatment?

SUDHA MEHTA

A The weight reduction surgery is called bariatric surgery and is done using keyhole access (laproscopic). The surgery reduces stomach capacity or interferes with food absorption.

There is also a non-surgical method to reduce food intake. In this, an intragastric balloon is inserted endoscopically. This will remain in the stomach for six months and make you feel full even with small amounts of food.

These methods are meant only for those who are morbidly obese, where the Body Mass Index is more than 40. You need to find out if you fall in this category. If you are not obese, a healthy lifestyle and body contouring surgery should suffice to get you into good shape. **E**

What is the life of breast implants? Do they have to be changed many times?

SAMYUKTA KHARE, MUMBAI

Breast implants do not have a specific 'life' period. Since there is no wear and tear involved as with artificial joints, breast implants can be expected to last for decades. Changing an implant may be required if there is rupture, leak or infection. Fortunately, these happen rarely. If one wishes to increase or decrease their breast size, then too implants need to be changed.

Q I am 23 years old, and in the last one year, I have lost 13 kg due to which I have developed stretch marks on my thighs.