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## **UT Southwestern plastic surgeons offer latest fat-busting laser targeting stubborn inches around waist, hips, thighs**

DALLAS – Sept. 20, 2010 – Stephanie Martinez had one of the most universal desires – to shed a few stubborn inches from her waist, hips and thighs – without harsh diets, needles or other surgical interventions that require staying at home and taking time off from work.

So she agreed to help UT Southwestern Medical Center plastic surgeons evaluate Zerona, a new type of body-contouring laser that moves effortlessly across the outer skin, disrupting fat cells so they flush out of the body naturally.

After lying on her back for 20 minutes, then on her stomach for another 20 minutes while an array of light waved over her waist, hips and thighs, Ms. Martinez, 36, was able to walk out of the room and immediately return to work. Compared to traditional liposuction, Zerona requires no incisions, and there are no burning aftereffects, as with other types of lasers.

“There was really no downside. You can do it during your lunch hour,” she said. “It didn’t hurt or anything. That’s what I loved about it. There’s no invasive surgery or poking or injecting. You just lie there and relax.”

The laser, just approved by the Food and Drug Administration to be both safe and effective for noninvasive body slimming, can be used on the waist, hips and thighs and may also work for other applications, such as male breast reduction or neck and arm flab. The procedure requires six, 40-minute sessions over a two-week period.

“Zerona is really for helping you fit into your clothes,” said Dr. Jeffrey Kenkel, vice chairman of plastic surgery and director of the Clinical Center for Cosmetic Laser Treatment at UT Southwestern.

Zerona does not supplant traditional liposuction for those needing a more significant contour change, so good candidates need to be close to their ideal body weight and have good skin quality to see good results, he said.

“I lost inches on both thighs and on my hips – about 2½ inches on my hips. My stomach area is

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my real problem area, and I lost nearly 3 inches,” Ms Martinez said.

The low-level lasers cause fat cells to lose the fat, Dr. Kenkel explained. The body then disposes of it naturally through absorption or excretion.

“We’re a clearinghouse for technology, and we’ve been excited by the data from Zerona,” said Dr. Kenkel, whose research focuses on laser treatments.

The lasers have been used for many years for managing joint pain. Already-released data from a previous study on Zerona reported that patients lost an average of 3.64 inches from their waist, hips and thighs combined. By comparison, the control group lost an average of 1/2 inch.

“To ensure you’re spending your money wisely to get the results you want, every patient should be evaluated by a physician first, and you should consult a board-certified plastic surgeon rather than just heading down to the closest spa,” said Dr. Kenkel, who is also chief of plastic surgery at the Dallas Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

“Just having the latest technology won’t guarantee you see the transformation you envisioned. As plastic surgeons on the cutting edge of technology, we can really give an objective assessment about what all the options are.”

Visit <http://www.utsouthwestern.org/plasticsurgery> to learn more about UT Southwestern’s clinical services in plastic surgery.

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