

INSPIRE

## Nip &amp; Tuck

*Dr Tracy Mountford*

**Q** NO MATTER how much I exercise, the upper part of my midriff remains flabby. At 54, can I achieve a flat tummy without going under the knife?

**A** DURING the perimenopausal period, usually between the mid-40s and mid-50s, fat distribution alters and generally we become more apple-shaped.

In older women, weight is stored around the middle, including the back, hence the dreaded back fat that many older women complain of.

Fat tends to accumulate quite high on the abdomen, between the breast and the navel, which is why it becomes harder to achieve a flat stomach.

Addressing your diet is key — I suggest reducing sugar intake,

## Can I get rid of my flabby tummy without surgery?

avoiding alcohol and exercising regularly. It's also worth having your hormone levels and thyroid function checked. Thyroid function may change as we get older, which can make fat hard to shift.

The surgical solution to rolls of fat is liposuction. This is carried out under general anaesthetic and you have to wear a support garment afterwards. There is usually bruising and swelling.

Non-surgically, there are two ways in which fat can be permanently eliminated — either by

heating it with a laser so it's destroyed (a process known as laser lipolysis) or by freezing it.

I tend to favour the latter, known as CoolSculpting, where fat cells are frozen and eliminated naturally from the body.

It costs from £800 per area and although there may be some short-term discomfort and numbness, there is no significant downtime and you get a permanent, excellent result.

■ **IF YOU** have a question for Dr Mountford, email [drtracymountford@dailymail.co.uk](mailto:drtracymountford@dailymail.co.uk)