The Skinny-Fat Phenomenon and Why You Should Be Concerned

Description

An old friend of mine recently asked me if I had abs, saying that since I danced so often, my body must surely be toned and fit. Think of a dancer, and surely a lean figure comes to mind.

Nothing could be further than the truth. While there are indeed many dancers with a svelte figure, most donâ??t realize that these people already have a great figure before they started dancing. There are also plenty of bigger-sized dancers who do not lose any significant weight despite dancing for hours each week. Back in 2013, when I committed to dance rehearsals 7 days a week, I assumed I would surely lose weight for sure â?? yet I put on 2kg at the end of the whole stint instead.

You would think that given how often I dance and do yoga, I would be able to keep the weight off. However, the reality is that Iâ??ve only been piling it on. Before I entered the workforce, I was only 50kg; today, I stand at a shocking 55kg (in less than 3 years). I attribute this to a slowing metabolism that can only perhaps be explained by age.

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But if you look at me today, I bet you wouldnâ??t be able to tell.

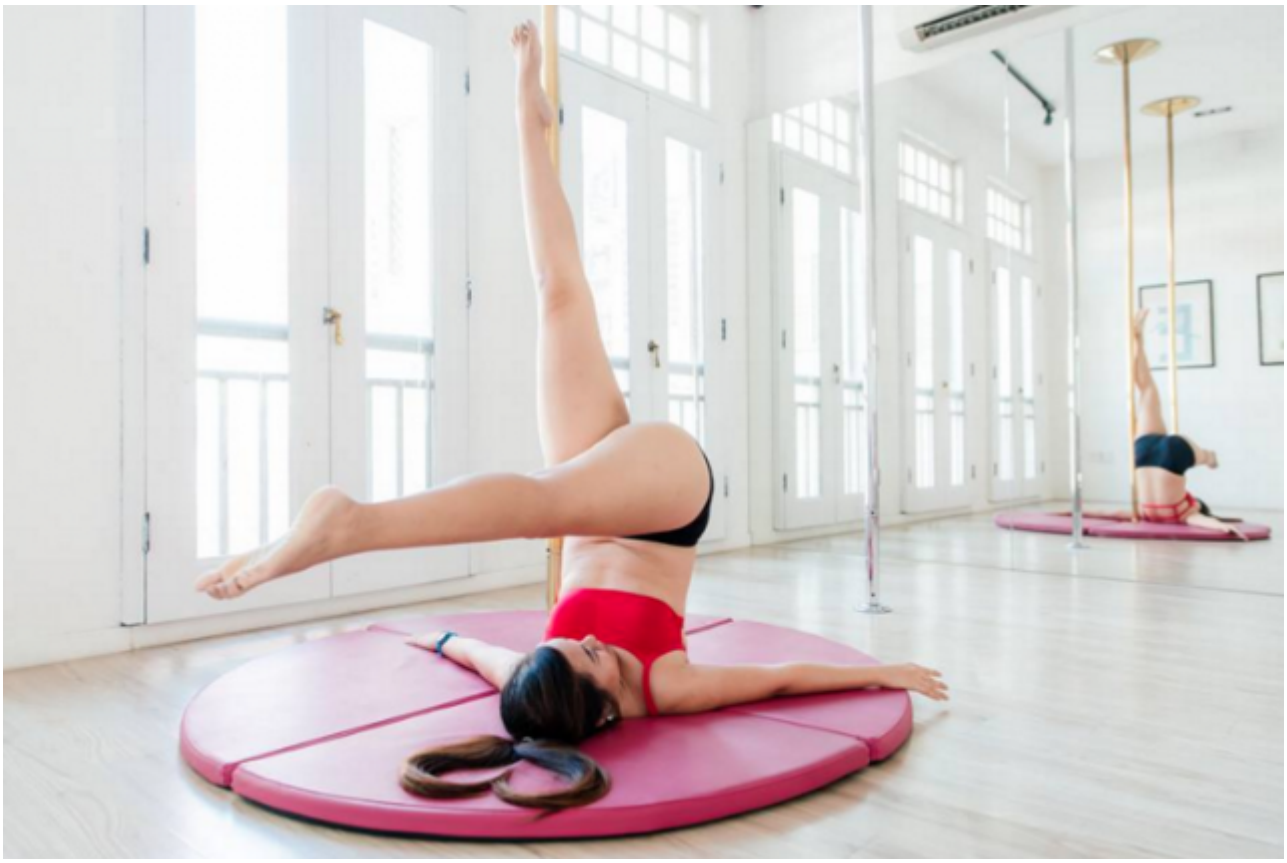


Photo by the amazing Cepheus Chan Photography

The problem is, weight alone does not tell the full story. Whereas BMI has been used to measure whether weâ??re underweight / fit / obese, in recent years, scientists and doctors are starting to find that even people who are of lighter weight can be saddled with the same problems as overweight patients.

While Iâ??ve written quite a number of articles on the importance of health insurance, ultimately, the biggest protection comes with prevention.

Many people are concerned about their weight, but did you know that even skinny people can suffer from fat problems?

The Rise of the â??Skinny Fatâ?• Phenomenon

With todayâ??s lifestyle marked by an increase in consuming processed food, sugared drinks (even in fruit juices) and a lack of sleep, a new trend termed as the new â??**Skinny Fatâ?•** culture has emerged. Thereâ??s another name for this phenomenon to describe such people who may not look obese but yet are extremely unhealthy â?? **thin on the outside, fat on the inside *a.k.a. TOFI.***

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Iâ??m sure we all know people like that, who seem to eat whatever they like without putting on any weight. They may look lean, but those with â??skinny fatâ?• often have a slight bulge at the tummy â?? thatâ??s an indicator you can look out for.



Yeah, I definitely had the tummy bulge together with thighs that were obviously storing fats.

The latest research findings are starting to show that it is more dangerous to be â??skinny fatâ?? than it is to be obese. **People who have more body fat are at higher risk of health complications and even dying early, regardless of their weight or body size.** Looking at oneâ??s weight or BMI is no longer enough.

Rather, we should look at our body composition, and pay more attention to the amount of body fat. For women, less than 30% of our body weight in fat is ideal.

ACE Body Fat % Chart		
Description	**Women**	**Men**
Essential fat	10-13%	2-5%
Athletes	14–20%	6-13%
Fitness	21–24%	14–17%
Average	25–31%	18–24%
Obese	32%+	25%+

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â??Skinny fatâ?• also indicates a higher visceral fat proportion, which is the dangerous part. What causes it? Your body type might be a factor â?? apple-shaped torsos are more likely to have higher visceral fat; or the cause might lie in your diet, especially if you eat oily or fatty foods fairly often.

Iâ??ve had a tummy bulge, huge inner thighs and cellulite for quite some time, so I already suspected that I might be a victim of â??skinny fatâ?•. So I went for a Body Composition test to understand my body better, and the results were quite shocking:

My body fat weighed in at 17.6kg, which meant 31.9% of my weight was comprised of fats â?? this is dangerously close to obesity levels! I knew I had a problem, but I wasnâ??t aware that it was that bad since I do cardio (dance) together with strength and flexibility training (yoga and pole dance) on a regular basis, 2 â?? 5 times a week. Yet, apparently even my regular exercise and active lifestyle couldnâ??t save me.

Combined with the fact that Iâ??ve been experiencing thigh chaffing in the last 7 months, I knew I had to do something. At first, I tried many different ways â?? orally, I consumed Acai Berry diet pills, Garcinia Cambogia pills and detox teas like SkinnyMintâ?¦but nothing worked. I even tried celebrity-raved Hypoxi and slimming salons, namely ProSlim and London Weight Management. For ProSlim, I visited them after purchasing a voucher online, but was immediately turned off when they tried to up-sell me on the very first visit. They were so persistent that I ended up paying over $60 on the first session alone.

I was more hopeful for London Weight Management, considering how they claimed in their ads of â??guaranteed inches lossâ?• and had so many outlets across Singapore. Unfortunately, my experience was so bad that it (almost) turned me off slimming centres for good.

My First Visit To BodyPerfect

Honestly speaking, after my experience, I naturally assumed BodyPerfect would be somewhat similar â?? I walked in expecting sub-par service standards and little to no results (with any reduction in weight

probably due to largely water loss).

I was glad to be proven wrong.

After taking my weight, their consultant first spent considerable time going through my diet, lifestyle and even bowel movements in order to first understand where the root problem might lie in. What impressed me most was that instead of focusing on weight loss, they told me a far more important objective for them would be to help me break down the fat instead, since my body fat percentage were hovering at potentially dangerous levels.

Before starting me on the treatments, they even gave me a box of SmartFibre to eat, which was supposed to help improve my bowel movements for my body to expel waste and fat better.

They then explained to me that BodyPerfect believes controlling the fat breakdown process is the only way to provide healthy and sustainable weight loss. Each session is thus targeted at actual fat loss regardless of the type of treatment prescribed, which they broadly grouped into 3 categories:

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	Corrective	Biological	Stimulate
Function	To mechanically break down fats into smaller pieces which the body can easily synthesize	To increase the body's metabolic activity to break down fats and prevent them from reforming.	To heal and improve the body after treatment.
Treatments	- Cryolipolysis - Cavitation - Radiofrequency To freeze fracture, blast and melt the fat layers respectively.	- ThermoJet: burns the broken down fat cells into water, CO_2 and urea. - Brown Fat Mobilization System: prevents broken down fats from reforming	- TCM - Vela Smooth - Bandage wraps - Collagen simulative technology For improving the body's lymphatic system, natural drainage process and for recontouring.

As a former Biology student, I was quite impressed with their techniques and methodology employed, in contrast to the very basic information provided to me at LWM which didnâ??t seem to fit what I knew about fat and our bodyâ??s ability to break it down.

BodyPerfect then came up with a combination of treatments for me, which involved using their latest aesthetic technology together with traditional body wraps for best results.

So far, Iâ??ve tried the following:

40k Ultrasonic Cavitation â?? a non-surgical liposuction technique which breaks down the larger fatty acid chains into smaller sizes, allowing the body to metabolize the fats faster.



I was totally blown away by this technology as cavitation is still relatively new, so I wasnâ??t expecting it to be available in Singapore yet, much less at BodyPerfect! The coolest part about this treatment was that it emits the high frequency sound waves similar to the ones you hear when youâ??re undergoing an ultrasound scan. Thatâ??s also how you know the treatment is working. I didnâ??t believe it when the therapist told me I was the only one who could hear it, so I took a recording and realized she wasnâ??t lying!

Brown Fat Mobilisation System (BFMS) â?? BodyPerfectâ??s signature formulae to detoxify the body and prevent broken down fats from reforming. It triggers the brown fat metabolism through temperature control.



Probably the least favourite out of all my treatments as I had to put up with the cold, but allâ??s fine in the name of vanity (and health)! When it was first applied, it felt extremely cold, but a few minutes later I could feel the areas starting to heat up. The therapist then explained to me that the heat was generated by my own body and there was nothing in the formulae that caused such a heating sensation. Iâ??ve read about this before but wasnâ??t expecting it to be used in this manner, so it was quite interesting to watch them wrap me up and feel the treatment in action.

ThermoJet â?? to increase the rate of enzymatic fat burn by localising heat for more than 300kcal of energy depletion within an hour of treatment.



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This felt like lazy version of hot yoga! It wasnâ??t unbearably hot at all, and I dozed off during this treatment as it was quite comfortable just lying there not doing anything. It made me perspire quite a fair bit as well towards the end.

VelaSmooth ReveloZone â?? a popular technology for tightening and improving the drainage system for fat burn used by many slimming salons overseas! This 4-in-1 machine works with BodyPerfectâ??s nano-firming serum for creating long-term results and body reshaping.



Lymphatic Air Therapy â?? a vacuum-like treatment which uses air to help increase lymphatic draining. Healthy lymphatic drainage is needed to remove waste and toxins from the blood and this treatment is targeted to boost exactly that. It is also coupled with either the CryoWrap or ThermoBurn bandage system for the best fat-burning results. The treatment was extremely comfortable!



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It is still too early to tell if the treatments are effective, so Iâ??ll review it again after my sessions are over to share whether I saw any results at all.

Fingers crossed, and stay tuned!

With love,
Budget Babe

Category

1. Family