

Following her seventh and final CoolSculpting treatment in 2016 (repeated treatments are recommended), Evangelista claims, she developed "hard, bulging, painful masses under her skin"—a condition called paradoxical adipose hyperplasia, a potential side effect where the targeted fat cells "unexpectedly increase [in size]," says Dr. Samuel Lin, a board-certified plastic surgeon. Evangelista claims she wasn't aware of the specific risks, even though an investors' report in 2013 suggested that the company knew the product could cause PAH. "Zeltiq failed to even include any general warning on CoolSculpting's main homepage until February 2019," Evangelista's lawyer says in a statement. (Zeltiq has not responded to *People*'s repeated requests for comment.)

Crowned a supermodel—and one of the "legends of the modern catwalk" by The New York Times during the 1990s, Linda Evange asta has graced countless magazine covers and played muse to some of fashion's most iconic designers, walking the runway for the likes of Gianni Versace. Valentino and Karl Lagerfeld, among others. At the height of her career, in 1990, she famously said that she wouldn't "wake up for less than \$10,000 a day," But even as other supermodels like Christy Turlington, Naomi Campbell and Cindy Crawford have remained in the spotlight, Evangelista has noticeably been missing. "We haven't seen Linds around town at any fashion events in a long time," says one top NY.C model booker. "Then I saw her on the street a couple of months ago, and she didn't look like herself."

Last week the 56-year-old Canadian-born icon put an end to the mystery, revealing in an emotional post on Instagram how she's become a "recluse"-ever since, she says, a popular body-slimming procedure known as CoolSculpting left her "brutally disfigured" in 2016. "[It] did the opposite of what it promised," she wrote about the fat-freezing process, which has been promoted as a safe, noninvasive alternative to liposuction surgery. "[It] left me permanently deformed even after undergoing two painful, unsuccessful, corrective surgeries. I have been left, as the media has described, 'unrecognizable.'" Evangelista has also filed a lawsuit against Zeltiq Aesthetic Inc., which markets and licenses CoolSculpting devices, seeking \$50 million in damages. "With this lawsuit, I am moving forward to rid myself of my shame, and going public with my story," she wrote. "I'm so tired of living this way."

Evangelista first decided to try CoolSculpting in 2015, according to her court complaint, in the hopes of "contouring small areas of her body" including her abdomen, thighs and chin. Former

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Victoria's Secret model Bridget Malcolm empathizes with the struggle to maintain some ideal body image. "As a model there's a lot of pressure to look perfect all the time," she says.

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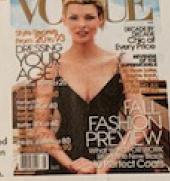
mended), Evangelista claims, she developed "hard, bulging, painful masses under her skin"—a condition called paradoxical adipose hyperplasia (see sidebar), a potential side effect where the tarHodel Influence
After Evangelists
(Jeft, with Nasoni
Campbell and Christy
Turlington in 1989)
Out her hair short,
women began asking
for "the Linda"—
and, she says, her
rate quadrupled.



A Designer's Dream

Evangelista walked the runway and was the face of ad campaigns for Valentino (in 1991). Cover Girl

The model last appeared on a U.S. Vogue cover in 2006, her 11th for the famed publication.



HEALTH WHAT IS PARADOXICAL ADIPOSE HYPERPLASIA?

PAH is a "rare" complication in which fat-freezing procedures like CoolSculpting cause fat cells to enlarge (creating lumps) or reduce too much (leaving a cavity)-hence the paradox, says Dr. Samuel Lin. Liposuction may help, but any disfigurement can be a psychological burden. - JULIE MAZZIOTTA

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Evangelista claims that Zeltiq offered to pay for corrective liposuction surgery, then "on the eve" of her procedure conditioned payment on a confidentiality agreement. She refused to sign and had two full-body liposuction surgeries—which she says she paid for, were unsuccessful and led to a "painful recovery."

Since then, she claims, the ordeal has left her with "severe social anxiety and agoraphobia" and cost her numerous job opportunities, including a 2017 Versace show with Crawford, Campbell, Claudia Schiffer and Helena Christensen—all of whom have shared their support. "It would've taken immense courage and strength to write these words," Christensen posted on Instagram. "Thank you for being beautiful inside and out."