

◁ feel crêpey, blotchy and dry. For six months, I sat cross-legged on the sofa suckling both babies, one under each arm like rugby balls, every three hours. I've never displayed cleavage, not out of prudishness but because there wasn't much. But I went from a cupcake 34B to a Jordanesque 36GG. While I was pregnant, men would say how well I looked... to my chest. Once the twins were born, male friends would turn up to 'view the babies'. Yeah, right. Within a month of stopping feeding, I needed to buy a whole new set of extra-small bras from Bodas.

A holiday with teenage boys was looming, so I had to buy a one-piece swimsuit for the first time since school, which didn't go down well with the babies' father. So with a bikini beckoning, I had to engage my pelvic floor and improve my skin tone. I'd never been on a running machine and was too tired to start. Sprinting five flights of stairs each time the baby monitor squeaked is enough aerobics for me. *Tatler's* beauty editor suggested the lipo circuit – courses of tingling needles that reduce flab and ban cellulite – but I couldn't face the fuss or cope with the commitment.

I needed to do something re-energising. I wish I'd known about Tara Lee's pregnancy yoga classes and DVD when I was fat. Her programme prepares you for the birth and helps speed up recovery and restore body shape. She showed me stretches that uncurve hunched shoulders and release an aching lower spine, as everything to do with babies involves leaning over and forward. Tara's classes are soothing, uncomplicated and invigorating. You can even include the babies – perhaps by using them as weights.

Baby-cleansing products are a growing business and I was worrying too much about which oil to massage the twins with and what soap wouldn't give them eczema. Organic Baby, Weleda, Green Baby and Mamma Mio are all friendly but, really, babies need very little. It was *my* lizardy skin that needed lubing. The new Ole Henriksen Spa at Bluebird doesn't disappoint. A blissful Salt Butter 'n' Mango Scrub that sloughed away months of dry skin was followed by a warm tropical-rain rinse sprayed from pipes suspended from the ceiling, then a massage with mango and cocoa butter. I slept and woke up feeling and smelling like I'd been to Harbour Island. I had never thought that baby-wrangling could be so physical, so for deep muscle attention I can't live without Rhiannon Elder at Soma Centre, whose strong hands pummel away knots and iron out tautness.

Apparently, there is cash on the kitchen table whenever I'd like to re-inflate my embonpoint, but I'm not desperate enough for elective surgery – yet. So in a pathetic attempt to recover some cleavage I went to

Spa Illuminata for a Decléor Perfect Bust treatment. I slept through the exfoliation, the sculpting massage and the restructuring gels intended to firm my depleted 32As. I woke up disappointed with the result but, then again, I had been dreaming of an Elizabeth Hurley décolletage.

Sleep deprivation was ruining the postpartum glow so I went to Katrina Repka for a facial yoga workout. She reckons we keep stress patterns in our faces. Deep breaths and face-scrunching exercises free the mind, relieve jaw tension, improve circulation, stimulate lymphatic flow and firm lips, rejuvenate and revitalize skin and smooth out wrinkles. I've been getting funny looks as I do 'the lion' or 'blowing kisses' at the traffic lights. My facial muscles feel relaxed and my jaw-clenching has subsided. But I'm not sure I can stick with it.

For a speedier fix, I went to Jyoti Patel for a bT-Ceuticals Combination facial at Paul Edmonds. Again, I slept through most of the gentle, non-invasive, dead-cell-removing, oxygen-blasting, hydrating treatment, but woke to plumped-up, soft, glowing skin. Two days later the biggest spot I have ever had emerged, Vesuvius-like. Toxins? Twin anxiety? Too much hot chocolate? Too many treatments? For emergency pick-me-ups on rare nights out, I lie in a hot bath of Babes With Babies aromatherapy bath melts, wearing Sisley's Eye Contour Mask to reduce fine lines, then slather my body in Sisley's Confort Extreme body cream and my face in Chanel's Sublimage Sérum.

What was apparent was that I needed sleep. Put me in a warm room with a bit of oily stroking away from nappies and purée and I'd pass out in seconds. Maybe I was vitamin depleted. I've never been keen on swallowing coloured bullets and passing expensive pee, as I do not believe they are necessary if you eat healthily. However, I took Zita West's Vital DHAs and Vital Essence multivitamins balanced for each trimester while pregnant and breastfeeding. The vitamin scan at the new Urban Healing department in Harrods only takes a few minutes. A computer reads the acupressure vibrations that run through the body and highlights imbalances. Mine said I needed,

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in order of importance: garlic (for immune function, to provide antimicrobials and reduce blood pressure); a multivitamin for females; an antioxidant (for cellular defence, anti-ageing properties and cardiovascular health); vitamin B6 (to reduce anxiety and maintain hormone balance) and rhodiola rosea (to aid memory function, balance adrenal glands and further reduce anxiety). I asked a friend, who is planning her wedding, to take the same test and her vitamin needs were all related to stress and, curiously, improving hair and nails. I was convinced and am knocking back the recommended cocktail.

The only thing I found disgusting about the baby experience so far is my hair falling out. Trichologist Philip Kingsley told me that you grow so much extra hair while pregnant you are merely shedding the excess. Brian from Suds (tel: 020 8393 7656), my favourite appliance repairman, had to remove fur balls from the dishwasher motor. I have to nuke every sink in the house with Mr Muscle to dissolve blonde strands and I could set up a wig factory just emptying the Hoover bag. I went to Harvey Nichols for a Kérastase Hair Ritual. My hair felt far less scraggy and looked shiny. The hair washer suggested that if I brushed more often then the hair would come out into the brush and not all over the house.

Now that I can see past my tummy to my legs, I have noticed unsightly thread veins on my calves and ankles. Pregnancy weight, hormonal changes, high heels, leg-crossing and too little exercise are to blame, says cosmetic doctor Nick Milojevic at the Lifestyle Clinic. He advised tiny injections called sclerotherapy that melt the veins, but he said mine were so faint they weren't worth worrying about. I do like a doctor who sends you away without unnecessary treatments, although I was tempted by the vial of Botox sitting on his desk.

What I enjoyed about the treatments was the time out – time I could snooze and be excused the routine. And within months the weight began to fall off. Friends accused me of being on a secret diet, but I'm too greedy. Carrying two 25lb babies and pushing a double buggy around the park combined with not getting enough sleep has to be the best weight-loss programme invented.

I haven't seen a movie or my passport for more than a year. Nor have I had time to update my wardrobe or been able to stay awake for an entire episode of *Grey's Anatomy*. I look like a panda, suffer bouts of angry-hungry and have permanent jetlag. But it all fades away when I walk into Edith and Isaac's bedroom and see four big blue eyes staring up at me as though I am the most perfect thing they have ever seen. □