



Cellulite Solutions

That Actually Work

**It's Not (Entirely) Hype That You
Can Ditch the Dimples**

BY JESSICA CHIA | PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER ROSA

WE'LL SAY ONE THING FOR CELLULITE: IT DOESN'T DISCRIMINATE. Eighty to 90% of adult women are saddled with dimpled, puckered-looking skin, and nothing (aside from winning the genetic lottery) can prevent it. But the old tricks—questionable creams, throwaway gadgets, and, yes, skirted swimsuits—have given way to smart new cellulite-attacking methods rooted in science, not snake oil.



Pamper Your Skin into Smoothness

The Best Excuse for a Standing Spa Appointment Massage

THE SCIENCE: "Cellulite is like a swollen fat sandwich," says Rachel Nazarian, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. The top slice of bread is the skin (dermis), the filling is the adipose tissue just beneath, and fibrous bands called septae are like toothpicks, anchoring your skin's surface to the bottom slice—the muscle—creating a puffy, quilted effect. Vigorous massage increases blood flow, which prevents hypoxia-triggered thickening of those septae, Nazarian says. To see results, you'll need a deep-tissue rubdown at least once a week, says Kristen Ma, an Ayurvedic practitioner and aesthetician based in Toronto.

THE OUTCOME: Massage can decrease the visibility of cellulite, but you'll have to keep a standing weekly appointment in the books—once you stop, the lumps will reappear.

The Spontaneous-Beach-Weekend Savior Radio Frequency Waves

THE SCIENCE: FDA-cleared devices like VelaShape, VelaSmooth, Smooth-Shapes, and Thermage use radio frequency waves to tighten skin by stimulating collagen growth and heating up the fatty adipose layer beneath the skin, which increases blood circulation. (When cells don't get enough oxygenated blood, the fibrous bands tethering skin to muscle thicken and pull even more.) Finally, the devices follow up with massage, suction, or vibration, which helps move excess fluid and fat (both of which contribute to cellulite bulging) into the lymphatic system so they can eventually be peed out, Nazarian says.

THE OUTCOME: With RF, you will see some immediate improvement and can show off the results the very next day (no bruising!). However, the transformation won't peak until you've had a month of twice-weekly sessions, each costing \$300 to \$600. (Womp womp.) What's more, you'll need a maintenance treatment every few months—forever. Go 6 months without and you'll lose most of your gains, Nazarian warns.

Cellulite affects almost
90% of women but only 10% of men.

diy for Smoother Thighs

The Jillionth Reason Not to Skip Your Workout Strength Training

THE SCIENCE: While you can't lose cellulite by dropping pounds (sigh), lower-body strength training may help. Building muscle provides a firm foundation for overlying fat and skin, though side effects such as muscle's higher fat-burning capacity and exercise's circulation-increasing effects may help, too, says Wayne Westcott, instructor of exercise science at Quincy College.

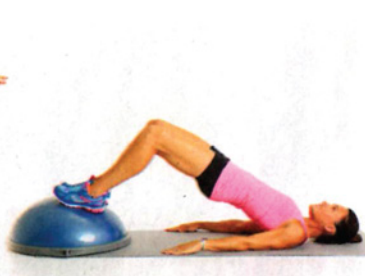
THE OUTCOME: According to research published in *Fitness Management*, 80% of women who worked their major leg muscles 3 days a week with about 30 minutes of resistance exercise reported some improvement in the appearance of cellulite after 6 months. "They looked smoother, firmer, and more toned," says Westcott. Your cellulite won't be a thing of the past, but this much we can vouch for: You will be more confident showing off your legs. Though you might not see major results for months, you can rebuild 2^{1/2} pounds of new muscle in just 10 weeks of training.

Three Moves That Target Cellulite

Perform 3 sets of 15 repetitions per move for stronger, smoother legs.



SQUAT/CALF RAISE
Squat, then stand tall, lifting heels to shift weight to balls of feet. Lower to start.



HIP BRIDGE
Raise hips so knees, hips, and chest are aligned. Hold 3 seconds. Lower to start.



DUMBBELL DEADLIFT
Holding dumbbells, hinge at hips, keeping legs straight. Return to start.

Head to prevention.com/cellulite-fix for the full workout.

The Slow and Steady Solution A Topical Cream

THE SCIENCE: There's evidence that topicals with caffeine, like *Vichy CelluDetock* (\$40), can help, and topical retinoids can strengthen skin so it puckers less. Ask your derm for a prescription-strength option for the biggest impact.

THE OUTCOME: Using a caffeinated cream twice a week lessens dimples, but only until you quit. Retinoids are more lasting: With regular use, they can thicken the skin by a fraction of a millimeter.

The Holistic Helper Dry Brushing

THE SCIENCE: Dry brushing—working a stiff body brush in circular motions from hands and feet toward the heart—stimulates the flow of both blood and lymphatic fluid just beneath the skin's surface, says Ma. "Poor lymphatic circulation can lead to inflamed nodules of cellulite," Nazarian adds. The technique also promotes collagen growth, which can make skin firmer and, ultimately, lumps less noticeable.

THE OUTCOME: The 10-minute practice will give skin a smoother appearance and reduce dullness, if you brush regularly, but won't deliver the "what cellulite?" results of an in-office treatment. Flip the page for the best procedures.



See a Surgeon for Serious (If Costly) Results

The Sure Bet **Cellulaze**

THE SCIENCE: This in-office procedure attacks cellulite from every angle. After inserting the tip of a laser just beneath your skin, your doctor will use the laser's energy to sever the stubborn fibrous bands responsible for puckering, melt the fat, and stimulate collagen growth to tighten skin.

THE OUTCOME: If you're looking for a once-and-done solution, this is it. A typical patient will see a 25% increase in skin thickness, a 29% increase in elasticity, and noticeably less cellulite. But it's no quick fix: The \$1,500 to \$8,000 treatment can take up to 5 hours to complete, a month before you're swimsuit-ready (bruising can linger for a few weeks), and 6 months to a year before the growing collagen achieves its peak skin-tightening effect, says Elie Levine, director of plastic surgery at Plastic Surgery & Dermatology in New York City.

The Buzzy Insta-Fix **Cellfina**

THE SCIENCE: This handheld device is the newest minimally invasive cellulite treatment cleared by the FDA. Using a blade about the size of a needle inserted 6 mm beneath the skin's surface, a doctor snips the tight, pucker-causing septae.

THE OUTCOME: The dimple-reducing effect will be apparent within just 3 days and should last at least a year. Unlike Cellulaze, which requires local anesthesia, with Cellfina you'll need only a numbing cream, and your bill may be a little easier to swallow—in the neighborhood of \$2,500 to \$5,000. But because Cellfina hasn't been around as long, its long-term efficacy is not as proven. Results have been promising so far, but the procedure basically banks on the hope that the severed bands won't eventually bounce back. "The septae have a tendency to re-form in the same way," Levine cautions.

The number of cellulite procedures performed has increased 38% since 2000.