

Cellulite be gone!

THERE'S NOTHING SEXY ABOUT CELLULITE, BUT THANKS TO A NEW RANGE OF HIGH-TECH, SKIN-SMOOTHING SOLUTIONS, YOU CAN NOW FIGHT THE BATTLE WITH ORANGE PEEL SKIN – AND WIN

There seems to be no escaping cellulite, regardless of your weight, shape or bank balance. Not so affectionately dubbed 'orange peel' because of the dimpled appearance it gives skin, cellulite is caused by fat cells that group together and swell, pushing against the fibrous tissue that connects to muscle, creating lumps and bumps under the skin. And although there's no official cause for why the fat cells swell, cellulite has been linked to hormone imbalances, decreased circulation, weakening in the supportive collagen fibres under the skin and genetic factors (yep, that means even you super-skinny gals aren't off the hook). And get this – men rarely suffer cellulite because they've got thicker skin, less oestrogen and their fibrous tissues are apparently shaped differently to ours. Damn them.

Banishing the bumps with the latest science

Determined to prove the cynics wrong – and the rest of us who've all but given up on ever finding a secret weapon for combating cellulite – cosmetic companies have bombarded us with new cellulite treatments and products that promise to banish the bumps. From the high-tech – like the laser and light treatments that aim to stimulate cellulite into submission – to the highly controversial – Mesotherapy involves a cocktail of fat blasters being injected into the area – here's the lowdown on the latest 'miracle' cures. As for whether or not they work, we'll let you decide.

VelaSmooth

This fancy orange peel antidote is a non-invasive, infra-red light-based treatment that is performed by a trained therapist, doctor or nurse. A hand-held device is massaged over the cellulite-affected area (usually the bum, thighs and abdomen), sending waves of infra-red light and radio frequency deep beneath the surface to heat the tissue and stimulate the creation of more collagen. This increased collagen helps strengthen the cell walls and stops the swollen fat from showing under the surface of the skin. The action of the suction massage boosts circulation and lymphatic drainage, leading to the better elimination of toxins and fluid retention. For best results, 10 initial sessions are recommended (twice weekly, for five weeks). But – at \$150 a pop (and with top-up treatments required every four to six weeks), a cellulite-free body doesn't come cheap.

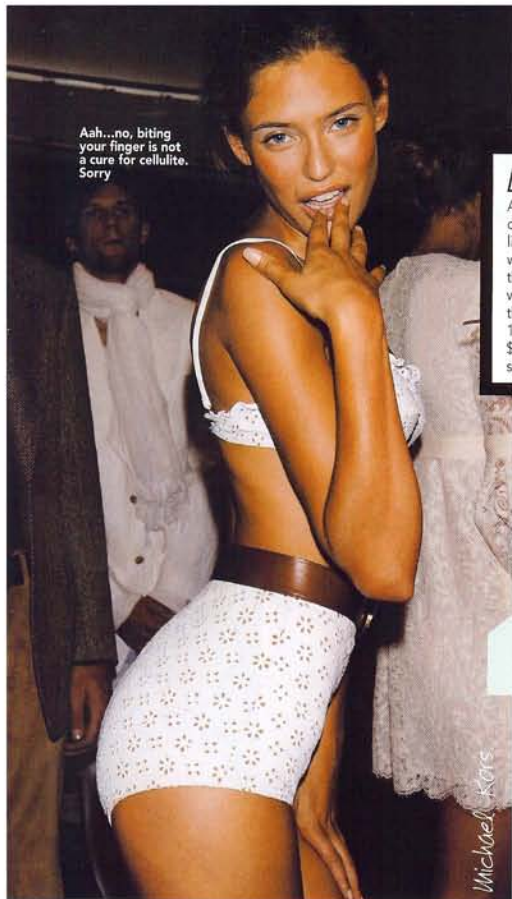
Does it hurt?

The treatment feels like a warm massage, but you'll feel a slight pinch from the suction. **The verdict:** According to a 2006 study published in the *Journal of Cosmetic and Laser Therapy*, the women who underwent VelaSmooth reported a 50 per cent reduction in cellulite after eight treatments. But while some cosmetic surgeons are quick to extol its virtues

('Infra-red light has the ability to penetrate deeper than other methods, resulting in a tightening of the skin and a reduction of cellulite,' says Sydney-based cosmetic surgeon Dr. Joseph Hkeik, 02 9890 7755), the jury is still out. 'In theory, the technology does seem to have a lot of potential, but we have to wait for more conclusive evidence,' says Victorian plastic surgeon Dr Ian Holten (03 5221 8444).

For more information: Call 1800 888 983 or visit www.incisionmedical.com.

Ash...no, biting your finger is not a cure for cellulite. Sorry



LIPO IN YOUR LUNCH BREAK

A new fat-busting laser treatment from Italy, which reportedly has some effect on cellulite, is now available in Australia. Smartlipo, also known as 'lunchtime-lipo', is being billed as a safer, less invasive alternative to traditional liposuction, which involves a general anaesthetic and an overnight stay in hospital. During the treatment, a doctor inserts a fine laser probe (like a fibre optic) into the skin, which increases the temperature of the fat cells to 45 degrees Celsius, causing them to break down into a liquid. The body then gets rid of the liquid fat over 12 to 16 weeks, through its own metabolic processes. The cost ranges from \$1200 to \$3000, depending on the area being covered and how much time is spent on the treatment. Visit www.clinicalskincare.com.au for more details.

Mesotherapy

Mesotherapy is currently Europe's favourite fat-blasting method. Invented in 1952 by Frenchman Dr Michel Pistor, the procedure involves injecting tiny needles into the middle layer of the skin (mesoderm). These needles contain a cocktail of ingredients (which vary depending on the degree of cellulite) chosen for their ability to tackle the different causes of cellulite, like poor circulation and the build-up of fatty deposits. Expect to endure 10 to 15 weekly treatments (one will set you back \$250-300) before you notice any difference.

Does it hurt?

We'd be lying if we said no, but the needles are super-fine

and some patients claim it's pain-free. There's also been reports of side effects such as bruising, skin infections, scarring and allergic reactions.

The verdict: Mesotherapy has been used for over 50 years and there are countless scientific studies showing the effectiveness of the treatment,' says cosmetic surgeon Dr Fabian Baez (02 9233 3103), who believes mesotherapy is the only treatment that will shift cellulite, especially when it's performed in conjunction with additional treatments like Endermologie (see below).

For more information:

Call ICCM and The Australian Mesotherapy Association on (02) 9233 3103, or visit www.iccm.com.au.

Endermologie

Another French method that's stood the test of time, Endermologie has a growing list of celebrity devotees including Tyra Banks, Elle Macpherson, Penélope Cruz and Britney Spears. Invented by engineer Louis-Paul Guitay (LPG is the company name) back in 1986 to rectify the burns and muscle damage he received in a car accident, it became a cellulite treatment after further testing revealed it also improved fat distribution. This machine-based treatment is performed by a therapist trained in the LPG technique of Endermologie. Basically, a massage attachment lifts and rolls the skin in a bid to loosen fibrous bands restricting fat cells, stimulate circulation and boost lymphatic drainage. You wear a full body stocking, which helps the machine grab the skin

without pinching. A course of three sessions per week (at \$120 a pop), for up to 14 weeks, is best.

Does it hurt? No, in fact some patients go to sleep during the treatment. It feels like a firm, lifting, rolling massage, which at times borders on uncomfortable – but you definitely get the feeling it's doing something.

The verdict: Eight women who participated in a clinical study reported a reduction of fat tissue after 12 treatments. But while the treatment aims to increase blood and lymphatic flow and modify the underlying tissue, Dermatologist Dr Natasha Cook says, 'Perceived benefits are temporary and therapy must be continued to maintain results.'

For more information: Call 1300 368 688 or visit www.endermologie.com.au.

FAT JAB

Although not considered a cellulite treatment, Lipodissolve is an injectable treatment designed to dissolve fat (not to be confused with the other injectable treatment Mesotherapy). An injection of Phosphatidylcholine (or PPC), a natural compound found in human tissue and soybeans, acts to dissolve the wall of the fat cells, which are then metabolised by the body. The procedure takes 15 minutes to an hour, and you'll need two to four treatments to notice results. Each treatment costs \$770. Call 1300 551 151.