

## Mail Today

Cellulite affects people whether they are overweight or not and depends less on lifestyle than genes and gender

# YOU CAN GET RID OF THOSE DIMPLES



BY RITUPARNA MUKHERJEE

**W**HEN JLo's most famous asset came under close scrutiny some time ago, many women gleefully pointed at the cellulite that dimpled its ample proportions. Closer to home, those watching Dhoom 2 pointed out the orange peel on Aishwarya's tanned thighs to their salivating men folk and smiled to themselves. Yes, even the gorgeous women in the world have what most women try to hide or get rid of — cellulite.

Doctors are probably the only ones who say that cellulite is absolutely normal and there is no medical reason to treat it. Despite this, in this world where looking good is what matters, women strive to smoothen cellulite via cosmetic treatments and products that promise to do just that. But the fact is that while some may help reduce the appearance temporarily, nothing has been proven to eliminate it. So before you before you launch into any of these treatments you may want to stop and collect your facts.

### IT LOOKS LIKE ORANGE PEEL

Cellulite refers to the dimpled appearance of the skin that some people have on their hips, thighs, and buttocks and rarely, arms. This is more common in women than men because of the difference in the way fat, muscle, and connective tissues are distributed in men and women's skin. It is not directly caused by excess weight, but a genetic difference in the way adipose tissue and connective tissue form. The lumpiness of cellulite is caused by uneven fat deposits that push and distort the connective tissues beneath skin, making it look bumpy and dimpled, quite like the skin of an orange — hence the term orange peel effect," says Dr Ritinder Kaur, dermatologist, A+ Medispa.

### CREAMS HELP TO TONE SKIN

Commercially available creams like VLOC's Shape Up and those offered by cosmetic biggies like Avon and Oriflame amongst others, promise shapely legs in no time and have many women enthusiastically massaging lotions and gels into their thighs and covering them with smoking hot towels thereafter, as advised on the bottle. The fact of the matter is that the regular massaging of these creams into the skin will certainly tone and firm it. They contain retinol and vitamins C which can improve the smoothness and hydration of the skin. But this is

### CELLULITE REDUCING TIPS

#### Work those legs

Since cellulite typically attacks thighs, concentrate on exercises like wall squats and leg raises and anything else that works your legs. Hold the posture till you feel the muscles in your thighs strain more than usual. Do the same for arms if they are your problem area— if you don't have weights at home use a filled two litre bottle as your dumbbell.

#### Avoid junk food

Experts note that eating a healthy diet can decrease fluid retention

and improve the overall health and appearance of skin, but specific diets designed to target cellulite are unnecessary. "Eating a healthy diet and keeping muscles toned by regular exercise seem like reasonable approaches to keeping the body as taut and smooth as it can be," says Dr Sunil Choudhary, HOD, Dept. of aesthetic and reconstructive surgery, Max hospital.

#### Have a coffee

Beauticians recommend rubbing coffee beans over the affected areas while bathing - coffee is supposed to have fat breaking properties.

a surface change only. "Results are cosmetic only, most of the molecules in these creams cannot penetrate to the layer of fat, says Dr Kashyap.

Such products contain caffeine or herbal ingredients which have been shown to shrink fat cells. They claim to reduce the appearance of dimples by firming, thickening and tightening the skin. "Even though these ingredients are shown to be effective on fat cells in a test tube, that doesn't mean they will work in a topically applied cream or gel," says Dr Ajay Kashyap, cosmetic surgeon, Fortis La Femme. He adds that skin creams cannot deliver the required concentration of these chemicals for the length of time required for significant fat breakdown. **Cost : Rs 250 upwards**

### MASSAGE WORKERS FASTER

When you are looking for a quicker solution because your Goa vacation is approaching, you can opt for specific treatments that literally iron you out. A lymphatic drainage massage is a vigorous deep tissue massage that involves squeezing and kneading the affected area. Centres offering dermatological and cosmetic services use machines which massage the areas affected by cellulite using rolling cylinders to gather areas of skin and massage them inside a chamber. One example of massage treatments is endermologie, which was developed in France. This technique uses an electrically powered device that suctions, pulls, and squeezes affected areas.

The kneading is believed to help break apart clumps of fat cells and release lymphatic waste. But the impact is short lived. "Any improvements from such treatments will be seen instantaneously — and briefly. The swelling between the fat cells are reduced only temporarily and studies show that endermologie is effective for a while," says Dr Kashyap. "These sessions of massage will depend on the affected area and typically involve minimum six sessions. Cosmetic sur-

geons and centers offering beauty and dermatological treatments like Clinic Dermatech offer this massage.

Other treatments on offer at Medical spas like A+ Medispa include Thermage. "This uses the heat generated by radio frequency to tighten the skin around the fat cells," explains Dr Kaur. The cost of these treatments depends on the amount of cellulite you want treated.

**Cost: These treatments can cost anywhere between 5 - 10,000 upwards for each session**

### INJECTIONS CAN DISSOLVE FAT

When massage treatments and creams don't work, those determined enough can seek injections to improve the appearance of their skin. Mesotherapy involves numerous injections comprising a cocktail of various drugs, plant extracts and vitamins, directly into cellulite during eight or more 15 - minute appointments. Along with this there are injections which use a single ingredient, phosphatidylcholine, which has been proven to break down the size of fat cells. "These injections are supposed to dissolve fat deposits and improve circulation and lymphatic drainage. The dissolved fat is then absorbed by the body," says Dr Kashyap. Even though these injections are not FDA approved many private clinics and qualified cosmetic surgeons do offer them. "The problem is that there is no evidence that they do work and most of the ingredients remain unknown. The single ingredient injection is more so risky because there is a risk of allergic reaction to it which causes inflammation and pain," says Dr Kashyap. He also emphasizes that these costly and time-consuming treatments only cause a temporary decrease in the appearance of cellulite, and that ongoing treatments are needed to maintain this look.

**Cost: 3-4000 per injection and sessions are typically six to 12.**

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