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So long, cellulite!

With these clever and effective ways to camouflage and combat unsightly dimples, get set for smoother skin ahead. By Melanie Rud Chadwick

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Look Great {Beauty}

Got bumps? Take solace in the fact that you're not alone. A whopping 90 percent of us have cellulite, a genetic condition that affects women of all shapes and sizes, says LA-based dermatologist Howard Murad, M.D., author of *The Cellulite Solution*. To blame is the anatomy of female skin, which lies on top of a layer of fat that's tethered to the underlying muscle by vertical bands. The "mattress" look results when fat bulges up around these bands, explains David E. Bank, M.D., a dermatologist in Mount Kisco, NY, and a *Shape* advisory board member. Estrogen also plays a role, causing fat cells to expand and clump together, rather than lie in a flat layer. The final factor is impaired circulation: Swollen fat cells decrease lymphatic drainage, which leads to a buildup of fluids that spurs further swelling. While there's no permanent fix for cellulite, there are ways to improve it. Here, the best at-home and pro tips to rock a smoother rear view in a day, a week, or a month.



If you have...

A day

PRO TIP Opt for fillers. "Injectables that add volume to the face, like Radiesse, also work wonders for cellulite," says NYC derm Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D. "They fill in the puckers and make skin look more uniform." This solution is best for those who only have a few small areas of concern...and a big budget (expect to pay around \$2,000). Still, the procedure can be done in minutes, and you'll walk away with instant results that last up to a year.

HOMETRICK When you have less than 24 hours to get bikini-ready, hit the bottle—of body bronzer or self-tanner. Dimpled areas create shadows that are more noticeable on lighter skin, so darkening your tone will mask these shadowy spots and make you look smoother, says Victoria's Secret makeup artist Carolina Gonzalez. Try **Lancôme Flash Bronzer Tinted Self-Tanning Body Gel** (\$40;

lancome-usa.com). Apply one coat from hips to ankles and blend well. Once it dries, add another layer along inner and outer thighs to make them a touch darker, suggests Gonzalez: "The subtle contrast creates the illusion of thinner, more sculpted legs."



A week

PRO TIP Consider endermologie, a noninvasive treatment that employs a machine to knead and suction dimpled areas. This breaks up fat pockets and stimulates lymphatic drainage. Sessions are typically sold as packages (the average cost is \$1,500 for 10), as you'll need several to see and maintain results, which can last as long as a few months. Go in for several treatments in one week and you can expect to see as much as a 25 percent improvement, says Bank.

HOMETRICK Give yourself regular rubdowns. "A firm massage will help separate clumps of fat cells so they lie more smoothly underneath the skin," says Bank. Apply a cellulite cream to trouble spots and massage vigorously. Just keep in mind that the benefits will be subtle—expect around a 10 percent improvement. Or, save yourself the elbow grease and try the **Bliss FatGirlSlim Lean Machine** (\$145; sephora.com), an electronic massager that also employs vacuum action to further boost circulation.



A month

PRO TIP Try Thermage. The noninvasive procedure uses radio frequency to stimulate collagen and tighten skin, which starts to look firmer after about four weeks, says Frank. While Thermage requires no downtime and only needs to be done once, it's pricey—be prepared to spend around \$2,500 for results that typically last one to two years.

HOMETRICK Take a holistic approach. First, start dry brushing daily. "The practice smooths skin by sloughing off dead cells and boosting circulation," says Murad. Use a firm-bristle brush like the **Earth Therapeutics Bumpy Bristle Massage Brush** (\$6; earththerapeutics.com) on dry skin, moving from your knees to your waist to stimulate proper lymphatic drainage. Next, think about tweaking your diet and workout. The less water you retain, the



less puffy cellulite will appear, so avoid bloat-inducers like alcohol and salt. At the gym, focus on reducing overall body fat by amping up cardio to burn excess calories. Though even thin women can have cellulite, Bank says losing weight allows the fat cells to shrink slightly, which may minimize the orange-peel effect.

LOTION LOWDOWN

There's no shortage of lotions that tout smoothing effects...but can they deliver? To a point, yes. Many contain caffeine, a diuretic that helps flush out excess water in between fat cells for instant de-puffing, says Murad. Slather one on and trouble spots will look tauter, though only for up to 12 hours. Try **Lierac Body-Slim Night** (\$59; lierac-usa.com).

For longer-term results, focus on improving the condition of your skin. "Thicker skin will better conceal the appearance of cellulite," says Murad. Picture a pile of rocks with a thin sheet thrown over it and another covered with a blanket. Just as you're less likely to see an outline of the bumps and lumps below the thicker material, so too will stronger skin disguise what's underneath, explains Bank. Pick a product, such as **Murad Firm and Tone Serum** (\$78; murad.com), that packs collagen boosters like retinoids, vitamin C, and peptides to build up the dermis.

