

# Prevention

## Weapons in the war on cellulite

How much cellulite you have—and the thickness of your wallet—will help determine your treatment options. Keep in mind that so far, no treatment can permanently smooth your thighs. Without maintenance, whatever benefits you get will go away.



If your dimpled thighs ever stopped you from wearing shorts to a picnic or caused you to keep your cover-up on at the pool, you're not alone: 90% of women have cellulite. And the quest to get rid of it has become a billion-dollar business. In the past 6 years, the market for cellulite products has grown by more than 113% worldwide, and it shows no signs of slowing down.

Most cellulite "cures," doctors and scientists agree, have been ineffective, to put it charitably. Recent research into the structure of skin confirms that cellulite is not the result of toxic buildup or inflammation, as is often touted by marketers. Instead, it is the product of anatomy (see "What Lies Beneath," p. 159), genes, and hormones.

The solution, therefore, is to alter what Mother Nature gave you—at least temporarily. There is no permanent cure, no magic cellulite-squelching cream or surgery, but there are advances: a drug delivery system is being put to a cosmetic purpose; wrinkle-reducing, skin-tightening lights and lasers are being turned from the face to the lower body; deep dimples are being filled; and in Europe, an injectable fat melter is being studied. Here's what's new—and what works.

# cellulite

# cure?

There's new science, new cures—and new dangers—in treating that stubborn fat

### creams

**Claim:** Depending on ingredients, some version of: "Within 4 weeks the appearance of dimpled skin is reduced and skin is tightened"  
**Time investment:** 5 minutes once or twice a day  
**Cost:** \$10 to \$50 a jar or tube  
**Effects last:** 24 hours with cumulative effects; don't skip an application.



**Expert opinion:** "The benefits are temporary and the changes are subtle," says Leslie Berman, MD.

### tri-active laser

**Claim:** "Smooths and tightens the appearance of cellulite"  
**Time investment:** 10 to 15 treatments  
**Cost:** \$150 a treatment  
**Effects last:** Long-term with monthly maintenance.  
**Expert opinion:** "Lasers have a lot of potential," says Mary Lupo, MD.



### velasmooth

**Claim:** "Reduces the appearance of cellulite and circumference of treated...regions"  
**Time investment:** 8 to 10 30- to 45-minute treatments  
**Cost:** Up to \$250 a treatment  
**Effects last:** Long-term with monthly maintenance  
**Expert opinion:** "The closest device I've come across that works," says Washington, DC,



### injectable fillers

**Objective:** To fill in isolated large dimples  
**Time investment:** Two or three sessions, depending on number of dimples treated  
**Cost:** About \$1,500  
**Effects last:** 2 years or longer, depending on the material, with maintenance if a new dimple appears  
**Expert opinion:** "I don't recommend Sculptra; it can cause lumping if over-injected," says Lupo. Weight loss can also leave lumps behind. Fat injections show real promise, says V. Leroy