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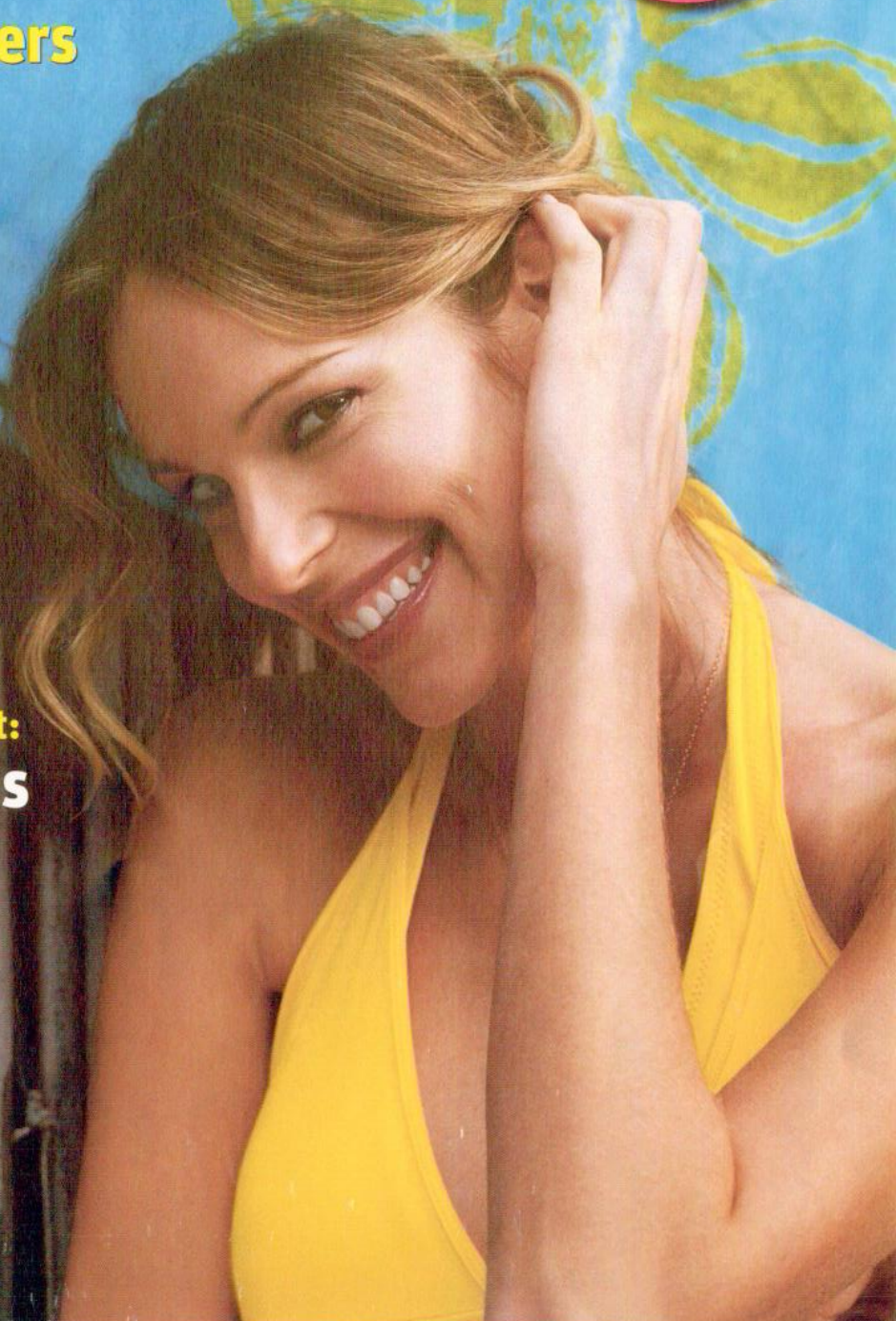
The Libido Drug

One woman takes it for a test drive

We never thought we'd say it:

Cellulite Solutions That Really Work

Win a Spa Trip to France!
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*By Christine Fellingham
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Cutting-edge
treatments
are taking on
this perplexing
problem—
with beautiful
results.

For years, you've heard that the only way to improve cellulite is with diet and exercise. That's pretty frustrating advice, considering that about 90 percent of women—including those who exercise like Olympians—are walking around with unwanted dimples.

"One reason it's been difficult to come up with a cure is that the actual physical structure of cellulite is so complex," says David Bank, MD, director of the Center for Dermatology, Cosmetic and Laser Surgery in Mt. Kisco, New York, and a Federal Trade Commission consultant on cellulite products. "You have all these fat cells sandwiched between fibrous bands of tissue that connect the outer layers to the lower layers of your skin. And nobody knows, really, what causes the fat and bands to bulge in some women and not in others." What

The New Skinny_{on} Cellulite

Fashion Styling: Tamara Rappa/burdeagency.com. Hair: Joshua Ristaino/Blink Management. Makeup: Fatima Olive/Blink Management/Aveda. Manicure: Jodi Cardenas/artistsbytimothyriano.com. Clothing: Skirt by Garmany (see page 228 for more details)



we do know is that the end result isn't pretty.

All that's about to change, though. Research is spurring new treatments that are producing visible improvements in a majority of women. We wish we could tell you that these procedures will magically make all of your cellulite disappear, but that would be stretching the truth. We *can* say that these are your best bets for making a dent—or fewer of them—in those dimpled thighs.

Lasers that relocate fat

They're the latest high-tech take on cellulite removal: painless lasers that smooth the fatty layer for a less-puckered appearance. One, called the TriActive (a laser surrounded by suctioning rollers), recently won approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as an effective cellulite treatment. A similar, newer laser is the VelaSmooth—which combines radio waves, infrared light, rolling massage heads, and suction—is awaiting FDA review and generating early buzz.

Both of these lasers theoretically firm your skin by boosting collagen while melting and rearranging the fatty tissue. "It's the perfect multipronged approach," says Neil Sadick, MD, a cosmetic dermatolo-

gist in Great Neck, New York, who conducted the clinical studies on VelaSmooth for submission to the FDA. "The laser softens the fat cells and increases blood supply. Meanwhile, the rollers and suction help loosen the fibrous bands and push the fat back into proper alignment."

The process: As you lie on a table, a technician passes the device over your target areas. Far from being painful, the sensation is pleasurable—like getting a slightly vigorous massage for half an hour or so. You'll see your best results after 2 months of weekly treatments. (Sadick recommends that you get maintenance treatments at 2-month intervals.)

The proof: In FDA clinical trials done by Mitchel Goldman, MD, a cosmetic dermatologic surgeon and medical director of La Jolla Spa MD in California, the TriActive achieved visible results in 100 percent of patients; 75 percent of them saw their dimples reduced by 50 percent or more. VelaSmooth also seems somewhat successful in studies. "We measured an average thigh-circumference reduction of 3.3 millimeters [about 1/8 inch] after eight treatments," Sadick says.

The payout: \$150 to \$200 for each of the eight to 14 sessions. Go to www.syneron.com for locations.

Clothing: (left photo) Dress by FAL; shoes by Bonjour Fleurette; (right photo) Dress by Kenneth Cole; scarf by Banana Republic; tote bag by Gap; shoes by daniback (see page 228 for more details)



New lasers can melt and rearrange fat in what feels like a half-hour session with a good masseuse.

Dream creams for firmer skin

Plenty of creams promise to cure cellulite. But the only ones with years of clinical data behind them are those containing retinoids, vitamin-A derivatives proven to boost collagen production. You can find retinoids in over-the-counter body lotions (listed on the label as “retinol”), but the most potent are the prescription versions sold under brand names like Renova and Retin-A. “Retinoids create a firmer, thicker skin cover that can help camouflage cellulite,” says Paul T. Rose, MD, who served until recently as professor of clinical dermatology at the University of South Florida.

Newsier, but not-so-proven, are fat-busting creams with ingredients like caffeine, black tea, and theophylline (a form of caffeine). The theory is that these stimulants work to reduce thigh circumference by breaking down fat-cell stores more rapidly.

The process: No matter which formula you use, you’ll need a good dose of patience. “Cellulite creams should be applied daily for about 8 weeks in order to see results,” Goldman says.

The proof: A study in the *American Journal of Clinical Dermatology* reported that testers

Dress for success? Our take on anti-cellulite fashions

“What’s that? Some new form of birth control?” my husband asked when he saw me shimmy into a pair of La Jolla Spa MD “anti-cellulite shorts.” This stretchy, black, knee-length garment is part scuba gear, part 1920s flapper bathing costume. I’d agreed to sleep in this thing for 1 week, dedicating my dimply bottom to an unscientific experiment that also involved wearing anti-cellulite panty hose and sneakers during my waking hours.

So what’s it like to fight cellulite nearly 24/7?

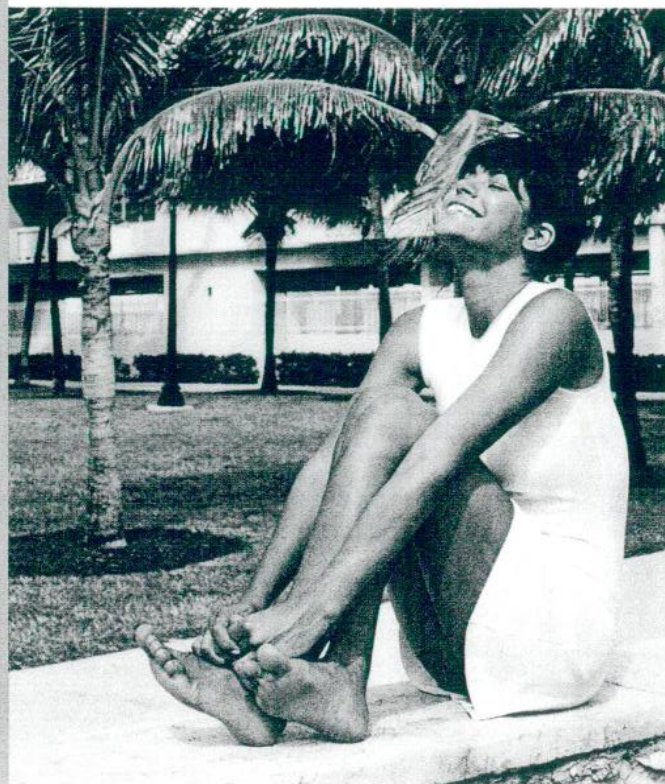
The shorts, which ostensibly use the “body’s own heat” to cause deeper penetration of anti-cellulite butt-and-thigh cream (you rub the cream on and then wear the shorts), posed the greatest challenge. Imagine

trying to doze off while a wetsuit compresses your sticky skin. My husband’s running commentary (“Where are your mask and fins?” and “Eww, there’s a seal in my bed!”) didn’t help. I’d peel off the shorts for my nightly 4 a.m. bathroom run but couldn’t bear to suit back up, inevitably slipping on my PJs, instead. Ahh, relief.

Compared with the shorts, the Hanes Silk Reflections Anti-Cellulite Control Top Pantyhose were a breeze. Though they’re “infused with cellulite-fighting ingredients,” including soybean oil and herbal extracts, they look and feel like normal control-top pantyhose. On occasion, I actually forgot I was wearing them—no small feat considering how silly I felt alone

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The same stuff in anti-wrinkle creams—retinoids—is now helping make thighs and hips look firmer and smoother.



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in my home office, dressed in a sweatshirt, the panty hose, my Nebraska Huskers boxers, and athletic socks. (What was I going to do? Slip on a skirt and heels, alone at home?) Still, I was relieved each day when it came time to free my fat.

As for the Masai Barefoot Technology sneakers: They have a thick, curved sole, so each step feels like you're walking on a tennis ball. I strolled in them, I jogged a bit, I rocked on one foot, as the brochure recommended. Other than my husband, who said I looked like a 15-year-old at the mall, nobody batted an eye when I wore my platform sneakers in public.

Though the shoes challenged my sense of balance (due to all of the rocking back and forth I was doing), I couldn't possibly

see how, as the company's Web site claims, they "may help reduce cellulite." Yes, the shoes did increase my muscle activity, but the cellulite was staying put. Our fitness expert, University of South Florida fitness instructor Aaron Brathwaite, was skeptical, too, and says the company's anti-cellulite claims "have no substance." And our skin expert, Lisa Donofrio, MD, a New Haven, Connecticut, and New York dermatologist, was equally dismissive of the shorts and the shoes, maintaining that there was "no medical validity" to the products' promises.

But I'll tell you: Even if those shorts were guaranteed to make my dimples disappear, I would toss them. Nothing could justify sleeping in a wetsuit. —Suzanne Schlosberg

who used retinol creams for 6 months saw an improvement in skin firmness—from 11 to 15 percent on average.

Early research on fat-burners looks encouraging, too. In a recent Goldman study in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology*, some 76 percent of those using a fat-burning cream (containing caffeine and green tea) lost an average of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in their thigh circumference. In another study, led by dermatologist Nicholas Perricone, MD—bestselling author of *The Perricone Promise* and adjunct professor of medicine at Michigan State University—testers applied creams containing antioxidants and retinoids twice a day. After 8 weeks, their thigh measurements dwindled by $\frac{1}{8}$ inch.

The payout: From \$12 for drugstore brands to more than \$60 for department-store or spa versions (you tend to get a higher percentage of active ingredients in pricier lines). Among your best over-the-counter options: Neutrogena's Anti-Cellulite Treatment, L'Oréal's Sublime Slim Anti-Cellulite + Skin Sculpting Body Firming Gel, Shiseido's Body Creator Aromatic

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Firming Cream, and Avon's Cellu-Sculpt Anti-Cellulite Slimming Treatment.

Devices that roll away ripples

It was big news in the mid-1990s when Endermologie—a treatment based on a handheld suction-and-roller device—became the first FDA-approved method for the reduction of cellulite. It's now one of the top cellulite procedures at doctors' offices and spas. Endermologie loosens the bands of tissue and rearranges the fat, Bank explains. Today, there's an updated version that's not as painful and requires about half as many visits.

The process: During any Endermologie session, you squeeze yourself into a skintight nylon/spandex bodysuit. Then a technician runs a device (basically, a vacuuming head surrounded by rollers) over your trouble spots—suctioning, pulling, and squeezing them for 20 to 30

minutes. The newer machines use less suction power and smaller, independently moving rollers, making for a session that's less like torture and more like a massage. You'll get some swelling and redness with either method, but the newer one tends to work much faster—in 10 rather than 14 to 20 visits (doctors usually recommend two treatments per week).

The proof: Endermologie originally received FDA clearance after a clinical study found it to be both safe and effective. "We checked the subjects at 10 and 20 weeks," says study co-author Lillian Nanney, PhD, director of plastic surgery at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. "And we found that while their fat did not disappear, the connective tissue in the treated area became thicker, giving the appearance of firmer skin. These results improved with each new treatment."

And those improvements seem to last. A study in the *Journal of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery* by Robert Ersek, MD, a plastic surgeon in Austin, Texas, found that all 22 subjects who did at least 14 treatments over the course of a year lost 1/2 inch or more off each thigh. And Ersek claims that improvements will remain with monthly treatments. The newer version is still considered to be FDA-approved (because it uses the same technology), but it lacks the clinical documentation of the first. But experts say the results may be even better. "It's logical that the independent rollers on the new device would make the whole treatment more effective," Vanderbilt's Nanney says.

The payout: Endermologie can get pricey, running between \$80 and \$150 per session. Go to www.aad.org to find a doctor near you. 📍