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## Jessie James Decker Is Calling Attention To Her 'Loose Mommy Skin'

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Her loose post-pregnancy skin is completely normal.



Jessie James Decker recently lived it up on a beach vacation and posted several snaps to Instagram as proof. In one, the country singer-songwriter and mom of two shared a bikini photo of herself sitting in a beachside lounge,

sipping iced tea. “Just another day in paradise!!! #icetea #kittenishsuit #comingsoon #loosemommymy skin,” she captioned the picture.

Decker is a mom to daughter Vivianne Rose, 2 ½, and son Eric Thomas, 16 months, and she’s been open about the fact that her body has changed after having kids. A few months after having her son, the 28-year-old posted a photo on Instagram of her midsection, which she says was in response to comments that she looks “tiny” postpartum. “I don’t want to mislead any mommies who just had babies and are stressing!” she wrote. “I am still 15 pounds away from what I was originally before I got pregnant with Vivianne. I take occasional walks but haven’t done anything yet to try and lose weight and am in no rush!”

Decker’s “loose mommy skin” isn’t rare, Gary Goldenberg, M.D., medical director of the Dermatology Faculty Practice at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, tells SELF. “Loose skin after pregnancy is very common,” he says. “Most women experience some of it.”

Loose skin actually has a scientific name—skin laxity—and it can occur in postpartum moms, as well as anyone who has gained and lost significant amounts of weight, New York City dermatologist Doris Day, M.D., author of *Forget the Facelift*, tells SELF.



In postpartum women, skin laxity happens because there is "significant" stretching of the skin during pregnancy due to the growing fetus, Joshua Zeichner, M.D., a New York City-based board-certified dermatologist and director of cosmetic and clinical research in dermatology at Mount Sinai Medical Center, tells SELF. And, after women deliver, their skin doesn't always go back to how it used to be.

Skin laxity is caused by stretching of collagen and elastic fibers in the dermis, the second layer of the skin, Goldenberg says. Collagen is responsible for providing structure to your skin, while elastin gives it bounce, Zeichner explains, adding, "both components are important for a strong, healthy skin foundation." When your skin is stretched, it can be tough for those fibers to go back to the way they were.

There are a few factors that dictate whether a woman will experience skin laxity after having a baby. Genetics plays a big role, Day says, as well as how much weight you gain during pregnancy and how quickly you gain it. "Most people gain the most weight during the third trimester, and that rapid extension and expansion of the skin can cause it to stretch beyond its ability of retraction," she says. Sun exposure can also play a role, she says, since UV rays can break down collagen.

The more pregnancies a woman has and the older she is, the more likely she is to experience skin laxity, Day says. Goldenberg says skin can repair itself over time, but it may never fully go back to the way it was before you had a baby, even if you lose all of the weight.

If you have skin laxity and you're bothered by it, Zeichner says there are a few ways to treat it. Topical treatments are one option, and he recommends looking for products that stimulate collagen and elastic fibers. "These products are typically made for facial use, but you can certainly apply them to the belly," he says. (Just talk to your doctor first if you're breastfeeding to make sure any treatment you're considering is OK.) He recommends treatments like Aveeno Absolutely Ageless, which stimulates elastic fibers, or Neutrogena Rapid Wrinkle Repair Night Moisturizer, which contains retinol that stimulates collagen. Keep in mind, though, that drastic results from topical treatments are extremely unlikely.

Ulthera ultrasound therapy or radiofrequency energy treatments—both of which can be performed by your dermatologist—can help as well, Day says. "It can take a few treatments, but they work really well," she says. Microneedling, a minimally-invasive procedure in which fine needles are used to puncture the skin to help stimulate collagen growth, can also help, Goldenberg says.

If you're not sure which is right for you, Day advises talking to your dermatologist. And, if you're planning to have more kids in the near future, it might not hurt to wait to get treatment. "It comes back with subsequent pregnancies," Day says. "If you're going to have kids in rapid succession and cost is a factor, you might as well wait." And, of course, you might decide to take a page out of Decker's book and embrace the proof of an incredible way your body has changed.