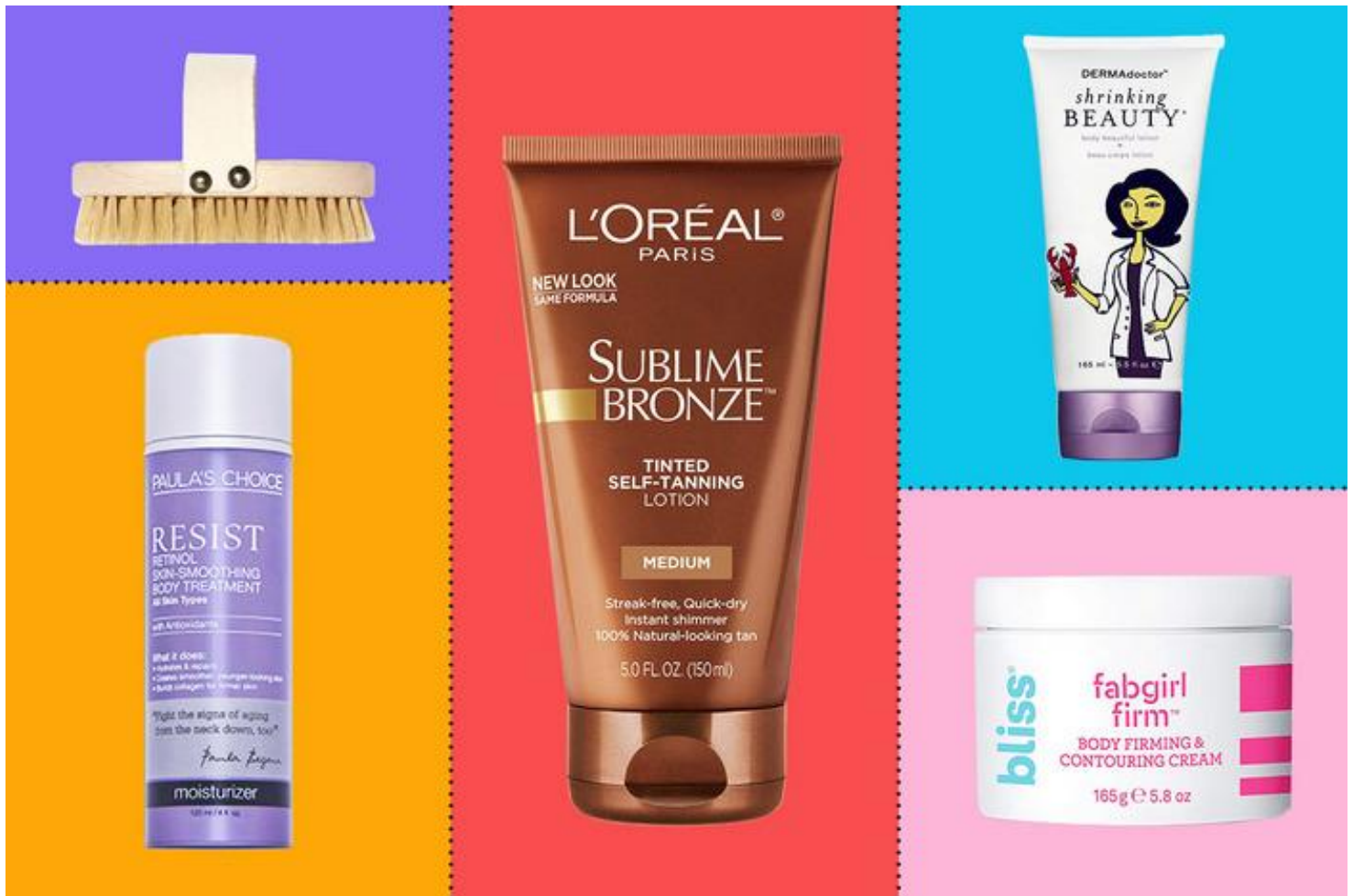


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Can You Actually Do Anything About Cellulite at Home?

By Karen Iorio Adelson



It's swimsuit season, and if the thought of wearing a bikini leaves you less than enthusiastic, we understand. According to dermatologist Marnie Nussbaum, more than 90 percent of women will experience cellulite at some point in their lives. Nussbaum explains that cellulite occurs when underlying fat cells — usually in the thighs, hips, or butt — press against the tight fibrous bands, called septae, that connect muscles to the skin. “When those bands are stretched to the max and fat gets pushed past, you get puckering or dimpling,” she says. She stresses that cellulite can occur no matter how much you weigh. It's usually caused by genetics and exacerbated by factors that contribute to inflammation or decreased muscle tone, like smoking, a sedentary lifestyle, or a high-sugar diet.

Despite how common it is, the condition remains notoriously hard to treat. “Cellulite is a complex architectural disruption that is largely happening deep in the skin and you won't be able to penetrate that area with topical products,” says Evan Rieder, a dermatologist at NYU Langone Health. In-office procedures that use radio

frequency devices or needles to break up fibrous bands can be effective for up to two years, while the effect of at-home treatments tend to be much more temporary, with some lasting hours or days.

If you do want to try taking on cellulite at home, there are some products that dermatologists say are better than most, but the key is consistent use — and not setting your expectations too high. “A cream can help when applied religiously because the temporary effects they give are prolonged to daily effects,” says Dendy Engelman of Medical Dermatology & Cosmetic Surgery, “[but] if the cream is discontinued, most often the skin returns to its baseline appearance.” Anne Chapas, founder and medical director at Union Square Laser Dermatology, adds, “There is no miracle cream that will fully get rid of cellulite, but there are products that can help reduce its appearance.” Below, seven dermatologists share the ones worth adding to your routine.

Best bodywash for cellulite



Olay Moisture Ribbons Plus Shea + Lavender Oil Body Wash

Before getting into targeted treatment for cellulite, Nussbaum advises making sure your skin is properly hydrated, as dry skin with layers of dead skin cells accentuates the appearance of cellulite. Start in the shower with this bodywash that she says “contains shea butter and pro-glycerin to help keep skin extra moisturized and hydrated,” and is formulated in a way that “actually helps the moisturizing ingredients get down and penetrate the skin better.”

Best moisturizers for cellulite



CeraVe SA Lotion for Rough and Bumpy Skin

For a daily moisturizer, Nussbaum likes this one because it has salicylic acid to exfoliate and slough off dead skin cells and hyaluronic acid for hydration.



StriVectin Advanced Retinol Intensive Night Moisturizer

It's definitely pricier, but dermatologist Debra Jaliman likes that the StriVectin moisturizer is "loaded with great ingredients," including retinol, which "will make the skin thicker and makes the cellulite less noticeable." Chapas agrees that retinol can "boost collagen growth and thicken the skin that overlies fat cells, which can gradually smooth lumps and bumps in the process."

Best cellulite treatments



Paula's Choice RESIST Retinol Skin-Smoothing Body Treatment

Retinol is also a leading ingredient in cellulite creams, and Nussbaum is a fan of this one in particular for its ability to "increase collagen and elastin to tighten the skin and make it look firmer." Still, it's not a magic bullet. Rieder points out that there have been studies on retinol in which patients reported "some transient improvement in the appearance of cellulite," but there's no evidence of a long-term effect.



Bliss Fabgirl Firm Body Firming & Contouring Cream

\$20 (was \$36, now 44% off)

The other star ingredient in cellulite treatments is caffeine. “Caffeine is a vasoconstrictor, which in turn reduces redness, swelling, and extensive fluid from pooling under the surface of your skin,” says Engelman. “This will give a tightened appearance. Furthermore, caffeine contains anti-inflammatory properties that can further improve skin texture.” For a cream with caffeine, Joshua Zeichner, director of cosmetic and clinical research in the department of dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital, likes this one from Bliss.



DERMAdoctor Shrinking Beauty Body Beautiful Lotion

Another caffeinated option, this lotion, chosen by Nussbaum, also contains a blend of botanicals (like ivy and bayberry extracts) to smooth skin. Like retinol, though, any product with caffeine must be used regularly or the effects will disappear. As **Gary Goldenberg** of Goldenberg Dermatology says, “caffeine can help decrease the appearance of cellulite super temporarily. It works by dehydrating the tissue and making it look more even.”

Best scrub for cellulite



SheaMoisture Coconut Oil Coffee Scrub

For a caffeinated body scrub, Jaliman likes that this one “has ground coffee, which exfoliates [and] helps with your dimpling and to get your skin supple.” Plus, it’s got “naturally antibacterial” and “extremely hydrating” coconut oil to nourish the skin.

Best self-tanner for cellulite



L'Oreal Paris Sublime Bronze Tinted Self-Tanning Lotion Medium Natural Tan

If you don't have weeks to slather on cream for minimal results — or if you have a beach vacation coming up — a self-tanner can be a quick, short-term fix. While it won't do anything to reduce cellulite, Zeichner says this one will at least “cosmetically camouflage it.”

Best tools for cellulite



Dr. Barbara Sturm Anti-Cellulite Body Brush

While there haven't been any clinical studies to back it up, some dermatologists think regular dry brushing can be beneficial. Because it decreases local inflammation and promotes lymphatic drainage, Rieder says it "can probably cause the temporary improvement in the appearance of cellulite," much like a deep, lymphatic massage. Nussbaum likes that dry brushing increases blood flow to the skin, which can make it look more supple, and Engelman says, "It exfoliates the skin, boosts circulation and elasticity."



NuFACE NuBODY Skin Toning Device

It's not as powerful as radio frequency devices used by dermatologists, but this at-home gadget utilizes the same concept of electric microcurrents to smooth away cellulite. "This type of technique helps to bring oxygen to the area and increases blood flow to the skin [and] might help reduce the appearance of cellulite," says Jaliman. On the other hand, if you're willing to make a big investment in getting rid of cellulite, you might be better off spending your money on a professional procedure, which, as Julia Tzu, founder and medical director of Wall Street Dermatology, says, "address the structural abnormality that underlies cellulite and have a higher rate of improvement."