

These Women Say They Were Injured By A Popular Cellulite-Removing Tool

They filed their complaints to the FDA.

BY KORIN MILLER July 27, 2017



A lot of people have cellulite—that’s just a fact of life. But some people aren’t stoked by their skin dimples and want to do what they can to remove them. That can involve a trip to the dermatologist or trying one of a number of devices available online that swear they’ll help—but one in particular may be harming customers in the process.

A device called the FasciaBlaster promises to “get rid of cellulite” in Facebook ads that are targeted at women. The FasciaBlaster, which is essentially a plastic stick with massage claws, swears it can obliterate your cellulite by breaking up fat cells through a rough form of massage. The founder of the tool, Ashley Black, has over one million followers on Facebook. Unfortunately, the FasciaBlaster can also leave you with severe bruising and other issues, according to a group of former customers who have created their own Facebook page. They tell BuzzFeed News that they created the page after they say they were blocked when they complained to the FasciaBlaster Facebook group

BuzzFeed News reviewed 62 complaints submitted to the Food and Drug Administration, which reported severe bruising, inflammation, and changes in menstruation after using the device. The company told BuzzFeed News that

this is a “small fringe group” of social media “haters” which represent a tiny portion of customers. The company also called the allegations “baseless and unsubstantiated attacks on our company.”

The FasciaBlaster wand is supposed to be used up to to four times a week, and customers are told that it will cause bruising in order to break up cellulite. To use the \$89 wand, women are told to warm up in a sauna, slather on oil, and then vigorously massage their bodies with the blaster to allegedly break up fascia, which connects muscle to skin and contributes to the appearance of cellulite.

Founder Ashley Black tells people in a YouTube video that the wand can hurt because it means that you’re “breaking up” the fascia. As those layers get broken down, she says you should press even harder to smooth out deeper layers. The general idea is that the more pain you feel, the less cellulite you’ll have. It’s worth pointing out that Ashley isn’t a doctor, scientist, or physical therapist; She has a background as a health and wellness trainer.

Cellulite is caused by the tethering of connective tissue (the stuff that holds fat cells together) to the tissue underneath—which leads to dimpling, explains **Gary Goldenberg, M.D.**, assistant clinical professor of the Dermatology Faculty Practice at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. “It appears that this would work by breaking up this tethered connective tissue underneath by vigorous massage with this device,” he says. “This appears to be a pretty crass way of achieving this goal.”

Contrary to what Ashley claims, bruising is not a sign of cellulite healing, Goldenberg says—it’s likely related to the injury to the skin caused by roughly scrubbing the FasciaBlaster over it. And it’s not reaching the fascia anyway. “The device has to penetrate the skin—without breaking it—to get to the connective tissue in the fatty layer of the skin,” Goldenberg says. “Applying pressure and massage can cause blood vessels and capillaries to rupture, causing bruising.” (*We love this soothing coconut oil if you want to have a gentle skin massage instead.*)

While cellulite is super-common, there are less painful options to minimize it if it’s really bugging you. Certain laser therapies (such as Cellulaze) that break apart the fibrous bands can release tension under the skin and minimize the appearance of dimpling, says Joshua Zeichner, M.D., a New York City-based board-certified dermatologist. Some laser devices like Cellfina and Vellashape show good results, Goldenberg adds. But, he says, people who are prone to cellulite may develop more over time, so you’ll probably need to get these treatments more than once. Just remember: Pretty much everyone deals with this—and there’s no need to resort to self-harm to get rid of it.