How To Reduce Cellulite in Your Body

By Mike Dunn

There is no surefire way to reduce cellulite in a person's body. Although calorie deprivation can help and surgical procedures can effectively remove fat cells from the body, it is not possible to prevent the body from simply creating more cellulite later on. The formation of cellulite is generally genetic and it is much more likely for women than men because a women's skin pattern is typically more irregular than a man's skin pattern.

Let’s start by defining what cellulite is. Cellulite is the dimpling 'orange-peel' effect of the skin of the buttocks and thighs, especially in women. Among many cellulite myths are the supposed existence of two types of fat -- brown and white -- in which the brown is the type in cellulite, but medical studies have failed to confirm that there are any different types of adipose tissue."

Medical science, in fact, does not recognize cellulite as such and scientists still don't know what causes cellulite. Moreover, very few clinical studies exist on the causes, formation and treatment of cellulite, which explains the huge number of cellulite myths and bogus treatments currently on the market. All this makes cellulite a frustrating experience, especially for women.

Cellulite may or may not be a consequence of being overweight. Although cellulite is a "fat condition" which exists only in areas of excess body fat, a person doesn't have to be overweight to have cellulite. "Any localized excess of fat can cause cellulite, even though your total body weight is within the healthy weight range."

As noted, the reason that cellulite is more prominent in women than men is skin pattern. "Some cellulite studies have demonstrated that women have a generalized pattern of irregular and discontinuous connective tissue immediately below the skin (dermis), whereas in men, this same layer of connective tissue is smooth and continuous. Also, there are structural characteristics of connective tissue below the skin that make women vulnerable to developing the irregular extrusion of adipose tissue into the dermis, which characterizes cellulite."

In other words, cellulite represents a "break in the fence" where fat cells come into the skin area and the dimpling occurs where the support structure of the skin is still intact. Although men are not as prone as women to cellulite, men who are given estrogens as treatment for medical problems are known to develop cellulite, which suggests that cellulite formation is linked to hormones in some way. The differences in body fat distribution between genders may also be a causative factor for cellulite and this too is linked to hormone production.

In trying to get to the root cause of cellulite formation, scientists have studied fat metabolism and deposition and have come up with a variety of findings.

Most fat deposits are the result of two factors: 1. The number of fat cells (adipocytes) a person has and; 2. The amount of fat inside the adipocytes. Current evidence suggests that the original number of fat cells in any area of the body is controlled by one's original genetic makeup. There are no factors or substances that increase the number of cells in a body region but rather they do not multiply unless the other fat cells get filled to capacity.

Two theories are that cellulite fat has more proteoglycans (leading to water retention) and cellulite formation may be hormone-related. These are just theories, however, and there is no medical support for either one.

So, how does one reduce cellulite? Going on a diet is one way. Cellulite fat responds like other fat or fat cells and can be burned off by calorie deprivation. However, it is the stored fat that is taken away; the fat cell itself remains and can refill again with a return to excessive calorie intake. That is why some women turn to surgery as a means of removing the fat cells themselves. The problem is that although offending fat cells may be surgically removed, no surgical operation (to date) can actually cure cellulite. Wherever excess fat exists, which can intrude into the dermis due to irregularities in the connective tissue, cellulite will continue to form.

The bottom line question remains: Is there a cure for cellulite? The answer is no. There is no cure for cellulite -- partly because of fat cell endurance, described above. There may be a cosmetic reduction in cellulite appearance from certain skin creams (e.g. aloe vera), but as yet science has not yet found a cellulite cure.