

improve your bottom line

Cellulite is a fancy name for dimpled skin that, if you're lucky, will resemble the texture of orange peel. If you're not so fortunate, you may wonder who glued the cottage cheese to your behind. The good news is, you don't have to worry about cellulite any more: *The Healthy Skin Diet*, a new book by nutritionist **Karen Fischer**, has advice on achieving gorgeous skin all over

WHAT IS CELLULITE?

Cellulite is found in the fatty layers of your skin, but it is not "typical" body fat or unique to overweight people – slim women get it too. It is commonly found on the thighs, hips, bottom and stomach, and afflicts women more often than men. Males have a genetic tendency for stronger connective tissue in the body's dermis layer, whereas females are more likely to have irregular connective tissue immediately below the skin, making us more prone to getting disorderly connective tissue fibres that lose flexibility and movement, similar to when an old swimsuit loses its elasticity and no longer fits snugly. This tissue weakness allows the fatty layer to protrude into the dermis, which makes the skin look lumpy. Cellulite occurs in varying degrees in as many as 85 per cent of women.

WHAT CAN CAUSE CELLULITE?

- Genetics and hormones.
- Poor circulation.
- A sedentary lifestyle.
- Diets high in dairy products and sugar.
- Environmental pollution, chemicals, toxins.
- Nutritional deficiencies.
- Stress, as it burns up valuable nutrients otherwise used to repair connective tissue.

The five-step management plan

USE MASSAGE OILS

Everyone loves a topical treatment, but most commercial cellulite creams are loaded with chemicals and additives that contribute to your body's toxic load. To treat cellulite, you want to decrease your skin's waste burden, increase the removal of toxins and improve local circulation. Massage oils specifically for cellulite – containing no artificial ingredients and with the addition of natural essential oils – are your best option. When choosing an anti-cellulite oil, look for the following ingredients:

Birch oil is extracted from the plant *betula alba*. It contains salicylic acid, is astringent (so it helps tone the skin), improves circulation, increases toxin removal and has a mild diuretic effect.

Rosemary oil increases circulation to the skin and assists with elimination of toxins. Do not use this oil on its own – it can be found in anti-cellulite massage oil formulas, otherwise mix it in with almond and birch oil. Don't use it if you're pregnant, have epilepsy or high blood pressure. Other suitable ingredients include apricot kernel oil, almond oil, jojoba seed oil, wheat germ oil, vitamin E, limonene, grapefruit extract, calendula/marigold, carrot oil, fennel extract, rosehip oil and kelp/seaweed.

HOW TO APPLY ANTI-CELLULITE OIL

Have a shower or bath, then pat skin dry. Tip a small amount (about the size of a large coin) into the palm of your hand and rub your hands together to warm the oil. Apply the mixture where necessary (thighs, bottom, stomach, arms), using more oil as necessary. Give yourself a slow massage, working in a circular motion from the legs and toward the heart, to help your lymphatic system remove toxins.

Tip: Apply oil to affected skin twice a day, ideally morning and night. Never use a cellulite cream or oil without including exercise in your routine.