



According to a new report, cellulite could be down to your state of mind. Here we ask whether those bumpy thighs really could be triggered by repressed stress – and if so, what's the cure?

DO YOU HAVE 'EMOTIONAL CELLULITE'?

GETTING RID OF CELLULITE is one of our biggest body battles – and one of the beauty industry's most lucrative businesses – so it's no surprise that we're always searching for the elusive cure. But as trials are about to start in the US for a new injection that aims to tackle cellulite, a psychologist in Mexico has come up with a less invasive way to get rid of those lumps and bumps – get angrier and have more fun. Yes, Martha Sanchez Navarro believes that cellulite is caused by the emotional stress we're holding on to. "Not doing what I want, not studying where I want, not sleeping with whom I want – symptoms are the way the body talks to us," she told *Grazia* exclusively about her latest research. "It's something Louise Hay has believed for a long time, and now I agree."

For those not up on their emotional who's who, Hay is a self-help guru and one of the first people to talk about how the mind and body are linked. She believes that emotions we don't let out manifest as physical symptoms in the

body, each one appearing somewhere specific. Cellulite, she says, is a sign that you are prone to storing anger and punishing yourself.

If you're about to dismiss this as new-age nonsense, it might be time to think again. "The way you think in childhood completely determines the way you react to things in adulthood. If you didn't let things out then, you're not going to do so now, which leaves you more prone to stress – and yes, stress can be linked to cellulite," says cellulite specialist Dr Elisabeth Dancey. To understand how, you have to understand what cellulite is – it's not, as many believe, a collection of toxins. Instead, it is fat threaded through with a higher than normal number of collagen fibres. These then trap fluid and tug on the skin, leading to that spongy, lumpy, bumpy look. The abnormal growth of the fibres can be triggered by poor circulation, lack of oxygen in the area and poor lymph drainage. "Stress triggers all of those things because it decreases circulation to non-essential areas," says Dr Dancey.

Acupuncturist Maureen Cromey agrees. "The people who come to me with cellulite are often over-thinkers and worriers," she tells *Grazia*. "In Chinese medicine, these emotions deplete spleen energy, which triggers poor circulation in the hips and thighs, heaviness and fluid in the hips and the development of soft doughy fat. It can also be linked to low energy in the liver, which is, in turn, linked to resentment and repressed anger."

So does this mean we need therapy, not cellulite creams? "I'd say probably five to 10 percent of the look of cellulite is linked to the impact of stress or other emotions," says cellulite specialist Georgios Tzenichristos. "But the theory is not an excuse to avoid eating healthily, exercising or trying treatments such as radio frequency that we know make a difference."

Maureen says acupuncture can also help. By using needles in the hips and other areas, you can help free blocked energy, mobilise fat and fluid and make a noticeable difference to body and



mind within four to six sessions.

Louise's original solution, though, was to use mantras that help release the feelings you're suppressing without having them spill out as anger. The mantra for cellulite (yes, it really has its own one) is to repeat, "I forgive others. I forgive myself. I am free to love and enjoy life," at least once a day. If muttering to your thighs seems a bit too strange, take up an exercise that's well known for helping release pent-up emotion. Try a boxing class or high-energy aerobics.

But if stress-busting can't beat your cellulite, there may be another, easier option on its way – the cellulite injection. A second round of trials is about to begin on a jab that claims to dissolve the abnormal skin fibres in cellulite. Being conducted at New York's Stony Brook University, they involve a drug normally used to treat a condition called Dupuytren's contracture, where a build-up of collagen fibres in the hand leads to bending in the fingers. The drug dissolves the excess collagen, leading doctors to wonder if it would do the same to cellulite. In first-stage trials, the vast majority noticed a difference just one day after treatment, with an average 76 percent reduction in cellulite after six months. We'll be waiting... ■

6 SIGNS YOU MIGHT HAVE EMOTIONAL CELLULITE

It looks the same as the normal stuff, but acupuncturist Maureen Cromey tells us that the following symptoms indicate you're low in spleen energy, which could be contributing to your orange peel.

- * You worry about the same thing over and over again
- * You pick at food as you never feel quite satisfied with your diet
- * You're tired and crave sugar
- * You bloat after eating
- * You go to the bathroom (number two) but never feel quite empty
- * You collect fluid under your skin and have a doughy look

NEW CELLULITE SOLUTIONS

If muttering mantras is not really your thing, here are the latest beauty-based solutions.

LAZY BODY BRUSHING

We recommend the Mangwanani Thlapiso Full-Body Exfoliation Treatment at the Mangwanani African Spa (R350). It's an hour-long treatment that includes dry body brushing to increase circulation, which is proven to reduce the orange-peel look of cellulite. Call 0860 55 00 55.

CELLULITE CONTROL

Clarins Body Lift Cellulite Control, R470, is an amazing slimming treatment that both corrects and prevents the appearance of cellulite on all the layers of the skin.

3D TREATMENTS

Body Renewal clinics nationwide offer 3D cellulite treatments that focus on lymph drainage to increase the skin's circulation and decrease the production of fat. It's a great way to get rid of the worst of your wobbly bits, at least for a while. Expect to pay R1 100 per session. Call 0861 7546 72.