

## **Skin Imperfections**

### **The Truth Behind Stretch Marks & Cellulite**

#### **Meet the Expert: Alison Moffo, RN**

Alison Moffo is a registered nurse (RN) and a clinical educator for CosMedix.

When your skin looks good, you feel good about yourself. Maintaining a radiant glow is easy if you form healthy habits now. Skin conditions like stretch marks and cellulite are not only unsightly, but they can be disheartening as well. While there is no surefire remedy, there are several treatments on the market that can reduce the appearance of stretch marks and cellulite. After all, dimples are for the cheeks on your face!

#### **Q: What are some common concerns about stretch marks and cellulite, and what should people take into consideration when contemplating treatment for these conditions?**

**A:** The most common concern regarding stretch marks and cellulite is that people simply want to get rid of them—permanently. There are a couple of things that need to be addressed before undergoing any treatment: 1) As with any cosmetic procedure or treatment, make sure you maintain realistic expectations about the outcome; 2) The color of stretch marks, as well as the size of cellulite pockets, can change over time—the sooner you begin treatment, the better the outcome.

#### **Q: Although there is no known cure for stretch marks and cellulite, what steps can be taken to help reduce their unsightly appearance?**

**A:** The use of retinol can drastically reduce the appearance of stretch marks and cellulite and improve the overall texture of the skin, leaving it soft and smooth. Professional body treatments have been deemed effective if used regularly with a home care system, which should promote exfoliation, hydration and protection against environmental stressors.

#### **Q: Can changing your lifestyle (i.e. diet, exercise regimen or sleep patterns) have any effect on the appearance of stretch marks and cellulite?**

**A:** Stretch marks are not affected by diet and exercise; instead, they occur when the skin is stretched too quickly (as with a growth spurt in teenage years), or when a person's weight fluctuates. However, diet and exercise can often be used in combination with a topical skin care regimen to improve the appearance of stretch marks and cellulite.

#### **Q: Aside from the use of retinol, what other skin care products do you recommend to reduce the appearance of stretch marks and cellulite?**

**A:** Stretch marks are often associated with pregnancy; however, retinol is not recommended during pregnancy or while breastfeeding. The Body Revolution system from CosMedix is ideal in treating stretch marks and cellulite, most specifically, Body Build, Body Shape and the professional application of Body Lift. Each of these products contains specific formulas that stimulate skin cells and restore a youthful glow. Chocked full of antioxidants, they help tighten and smooth the skin.

## **SKIN Conditions Defined**

### **Stretch Marks**

A form of scarring that occurs on the skin and has a white or reddish tint. When the dermis tears due to loss of elasticity and collagen, such scars can appear. Stretch marks also occur when the skin is stretched at a rapid pace (i.e. puberty, weight gain or pregnancy).

### **Cellulite**

The accumulation of fat that presses against the connective tissues underneath a person's skin, causing a bumpy or 'cottage cheese-like' effect. Genetics, hormones and/or diet often serve as the root of the problem.

### **Skin Pigmentation**

Conditions that cause the skin to appear blotchy and lighter (hypopigmentation) or darker (hyperpigmentation) than normal due to an imbalance in melanin, the pigment that determines hair, skin and eye color. Skin pigmentation disorders are caused by varying factors, including sun exposure, allergic reactions and genetic inheritance.

### **Sun Damage**

Often the price we pay for tanning, sun damage occurs when the skin is overly exposed to the sun's intense ultraviolet (UV) rays. While some effects are immediately visible (i.e. sunburns and suntans), others appear over time in the form of unsightly wrinkles and liver spots. Excessive and repeated sun exposure can permanently damage skin cell DNA, resulting in skin cancer.