
medical | cellulite blasting technology

by Judith R. McKernan, R.N.

Cellulite—that dreaded dimpling of the skin that indiscriminately strikes all colors, genders and ages, regardless of body fat—has finally met its match. Radiofrequency (RF) technology has gained worldwide acceptance as the best noninvasive treatment for smoothing and tightening the rippled skin on the hips, thighs, buttocks, knees, arms and stomachs. In simple terms, RF blasts fat cells using heat, which increases cir-

al incidents of adverse reactions. Both use RF technology to combat cellulite.

Does it hurt?

Yes and no. Thermage heats tissue to 60° C, which means white knuckle time during treatment—it is hot! The manufacturer has introduced a chilled tip that gives some relief. Alma Laser's Accent XL heats tissue to a comfortable 41 to 44° C, which feels slightly warmer

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ulation, aids lymphatic drainage and releases collagen. The epidermis and the subcutaneous fat layer shrink at the same time, providing a tightening and smoothing effect.

Is it safe?

Yes, with the exception of possible contraindications with medical conditions that involve pacemakers, pins or plates, as well as connective tissue diseases. Controversy remains over the use of grounding pads during monopolar RF, and the lack of data on long-term effects to deep organs.

After initial Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, manufacturers must provide data on adverse reaction events to the FDA MAUD database. Thermage® has numerous events posted, including blisters, swelling, bumps and rare surface irregularities. Alma Laser's Accent XL™ has no reported post approv-

than bath water. The Accent XL boasts unipolar penetration of 20mm, and bipolar treatments give an exceptional tightening above the knee with 2 to 4mm depths.

How many treatments are required? Thermage claims a noticeable reduction in the appearance of cellulite with one treatment. Accent XL involves a series of between four and six treatments over several months.

Does it work?

Yes! RF treatment in my practice has produced reliable smoothing of the cellulite ripple, a measurable lift and tightening to the buttocks and a slight reshaping of the thigh.

To get the best result, we must help guide candidate selection. RF is for those—at or near their ideal weight—who have tried exercise and diet, and still find their shape needs help.



Six session before and after photos prove at least a 30 percent retreat of the buttock to thigh smile line, as the buttock is lifted and tightened, reducing the overhang onto the leg.

RF is efficient, safe and comfortable for the client, and gives an excellent return on the investment. But, it is not magic—the best technology and an experienced hand provide reduction of cellulite, yet it requires maintenance treatments. ■

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