

SmoothShapes Effectively Addresses Causes of Cellulite

By Bob Kronemyer, Associate Editor



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Vivian Bucay, M.D.
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Featuring proprietary Photomology technology, the SmoothShapes system from Elemé Medical, Inc. (Merrimack, N.H.), combines dual laser wavelengths with contoured rollers and gentle vacuum to improve both the underlying causes of cellulite and its physical manifestations.

According to Robert Weiss, M.D., an associate professor of dermatology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine (Baltimore, Md.) and current president-elect of the *American Society of Dermatologic Surgery*, "We've evaluated close to a dozen systems over the years and SmoothShapes is the first device that actually works for cellulite." The dual wavelengths of SmoothShapes "influence cellulite like they ought to."

Dr. Weiss is the principal investigator of an ongoing study of the SmoothShapes device involving ten women (ranging in age from 21 to 45) undergoing eight 15 minute sessions (twice a week) for cellulite on one of their upper thighs. "Even after only two or three sessions, patients notice that the treated area feels and looks much smoother."

Study patients will be followed for a total of three months to observe longevity of effect. "We're looking for long lasting improvement of cellulite rather than temporary," Dr. Weiss stated. "I would anticipate results will last somewhere between 6 and 12 months, possibly longer, following the eight sessions. Patients also enjoy treatment because they feel it is similar to a massage. Overall, patient feedback has been terrific. We believe SmoothShapes will become an important part of our practice."

"We now have a predictable and effective way to treat cellulite," said Vivian Bucay, M.D., a dermatologist in private practice in San Antonio, Texas. "Treatment addresses the main causes of cellulite: inflexible columns of collagen and enlarged pockets of fat. These fat pockets protrude between the collagen, resulting in dimpling of the skin."

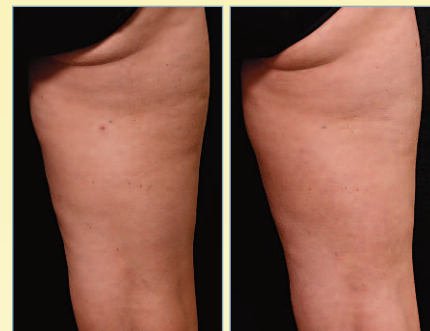
SmoothShapes increases flexibility of the collagen and restructures it so that "we don't have the fat pockets protruding

between the collagen fibers," Dr. Bucay explained. The 650 nm wavelength of the laser component enhances the permeability of the fat cell membrane, so that liquefied fat can exit this fat cell and enter the lymphatic circulation to be eliminated from the body, whereas the 915 nm wavelength is a target light for lipids.

Contoured rollers assist in the movement of evacuated fat from the cells to the lymphatic system. In addition, SmoothShapes' vacuum stretches the skin to achieve even delivery of the light. "The laser light, vacuum and rollers are all delivered simultaneously," Dr. Bucay noted. "Patients literally fall asleep during treatment. They actually find it pleasing."

Patients typically schedule a total of eight sessions (twice a week), with one body area taking 20 minutes. "Patients can expect improved firmness of the skin and a significant decrease in dimpling," said Dr. Bucay, a clinical assistant professor of physician assistant studies at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. "Due to the time required for collagen remodeling, patients will observe continued improvement for three to six months after the last treatment."

Even though knowledge of the lymphatic drainage system is required, the technician learning curve for SmoothShapes is relatively fast. "During treatment, the module is constantly gliding over the skin, therefore we have maps in the office so the technician knows which direction to move the Photomology module exactly," Dr. Bucay said.



Before Tx

After SmoothShapes Tx

Photos courtesy of Khalil Khatri, M.D.