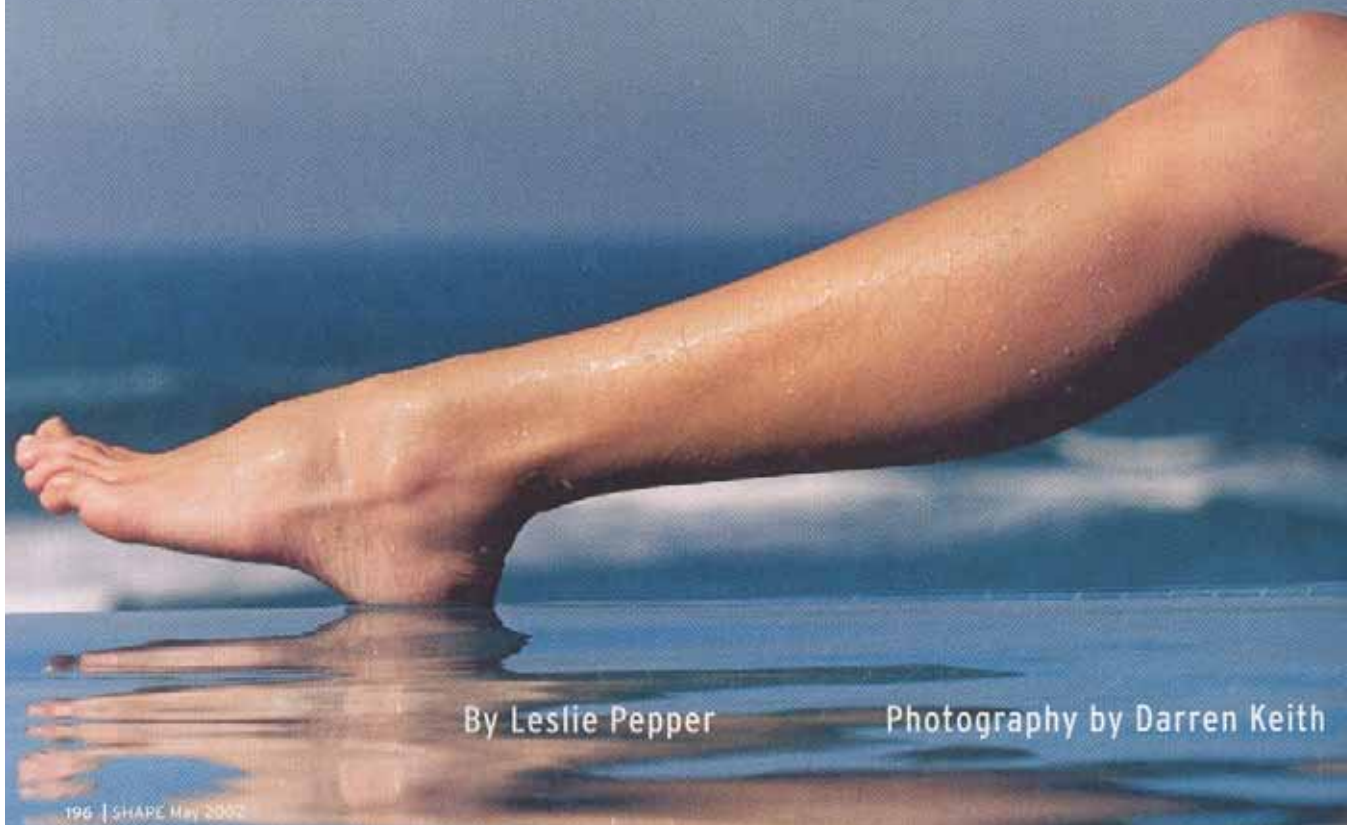


HOT LEGS

Simple solutions for smooth, beautiful legs just in time for the beach

Finally. The sun's beginning to shine and you can, at last, flaunt what you've been hanging your pants on during the long cold months. Of course, you'll want to put your best leg forward, but there are a few things that can blemish even the shapeliest ones. Spider veins (those tiny, purple veins visible through the skin) and varicose veins (bigger veins that bulge from underneath the skin) can make any woman hesitant to show off her legs in shorts, come summer. Cellulite also remains an age-old frustration, as does excess hair (and its removal). To help you ease your thigh anxieties, we've spoken to the experts and found the most up-to-date solutions for these conditions, so you can bare your limbs freely all season long. >



By Leslie Pepper

Photography by Darren Keith

3 STEPS to fabulous legs

Get Veinless

Although spider and varicose veins are due mostly to genetics, you can help prevent - and treat - them by following these tips.

- ▶ **Maintain a healthy weight.** Extra weight puts more pressure on the veins - and the legs.
- ▶ **Elevate your legs after a long day on your feet.** Doing so helps prevent blood from pooling in the legs.
- ▶ **Mix up high- and low-impact activities.** While exercise keeps the blood circulating, high-impact exercise (think: running or stair climbing) can increase blood pressure in the legs that may lead to problematic veins, says Neil Sadick, M.D., clinical professor of dermatology at Cornell

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University Medical College in New York City. Instead, vary your exercise regimen with lower-impact activities like swimming or biking.

- ▶ **Opt for high-tech treatments.** To get rid of spider veins, try **sclerotherapy**. Most people see a 50-90 percent improvement with this method, in which doctors inject a saline or detergent solution, causing the veins to collapse and disappear. For tiny veins not treatable with sclerotherapy, **lasers** are also an option. They heat and destroy the veins, says Suzanne L. Kilmer, M.D., a Sacramento, Calif., dermatologist and president of the American Society for Lasers in Medicine and Surgery. For varicose veins there's also **radio frequency closure**, where a small catheter is inserted into the defective vein (using a local anesthetic). Energy is then delivered through the catheter to the vein wall, causing it to shrink and seal shut. "After closure, patients can return to their daily activities immediately," Sadick says. (It's recommended that you not exercise for 24 hours after sclerotherapy and not physically exert yourself or take baths for three days following laser treatment.) Both sclerotherapy and laser therapy cost about \$250 per treatment and require about three treatments for optimal results. Closure costs up to \$2,500 (often covered by insurance).

Reduce Dimples

Cellulite occurs when fibrous bands of collagen (tissue connecting underlying layers of fat to the skin) are stretched, pulling down the skin's outer layer, making it look puckered. That's why cellulite is not smoothed out easily, says Arielle Kauvar, M.D., associate director of the Laser and Skin Surgery Center in New York City. But you can minimize it, by doing the following:

- ▶ **Eat well and exercise.** Anyone can have cellulite and several factors seem to play a part: infrequent exercise, excess calories and lack of muscle tone, says Robert A. Guida, M.D., a New York City plastic surgeon (www.drguida.com).

- ▶ **Take care of your skin.** Anti-cellulite creams, while not able to get rid of cellulite long term, do hydrate and/or swell the skin with ingredients like caffeine, smoothing it temporarily. Try Neutrogena Anti-Cellulite Treatment (\$20; at drugstores), Christian Dior Bikini body line (\$48-\$55; at Saks Fifth Avenue), RoC Retinol Actif Pur Anti-Cellulite Treatment (\$20; at drugstores) and Anushka 3-Step Body Contouring Program (\$97; anushkaonline.com).

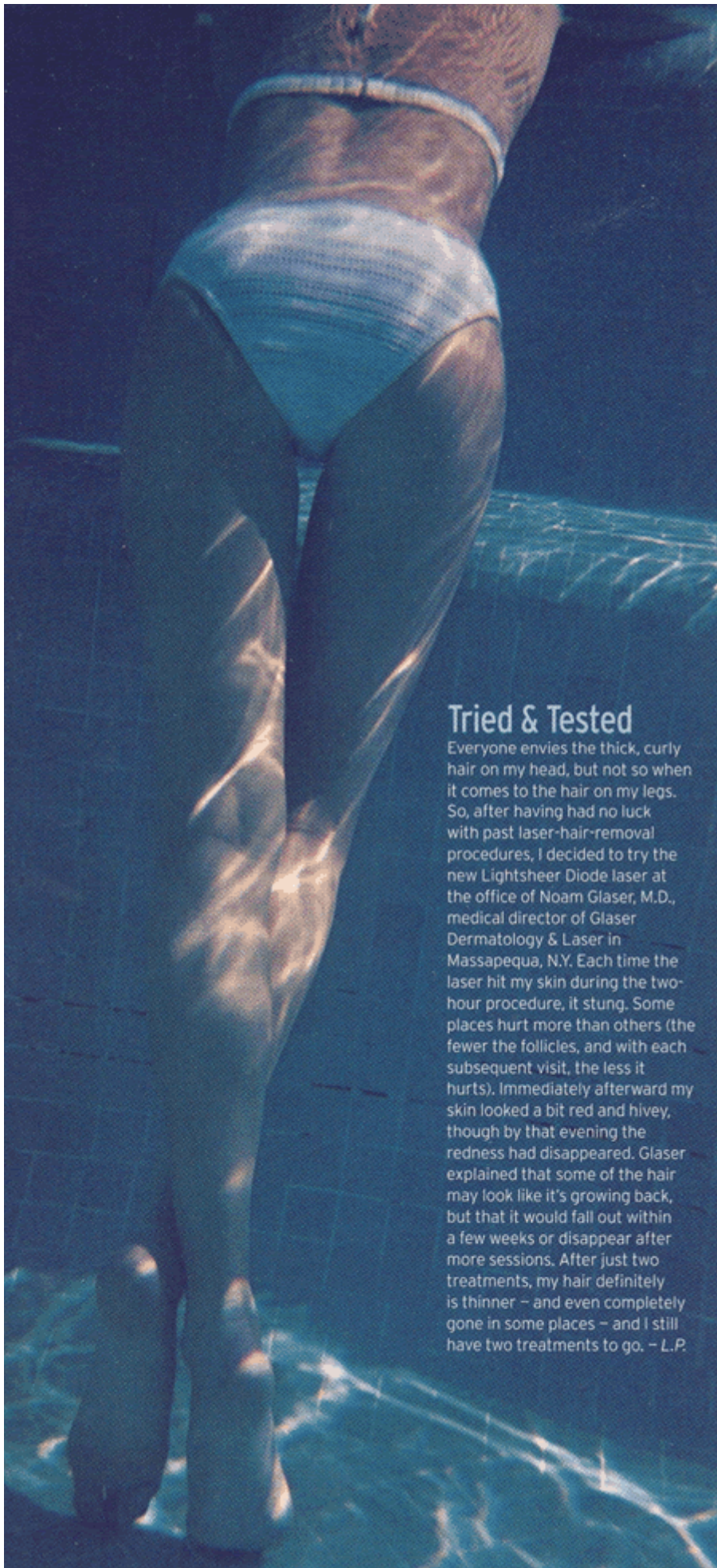
- ▶ **Weigh all your options.** Research has shown that a series of seven to 14 Endermologie treatments (which would cost about \$525-\$1,050) resulted in a loss of 0.53 to 0.72 inches from the thighs. The equipment's manufacturer, LPG America, has received FDA approval to claim that it may help diminish the appearance of cellulite temporarily. During the treatment, a trained specialist runs the head of the Endermologie machine (rollers are

Make shaving easier with products by Philosophy and BeneFit.



Try these lotions (left to right) by Neutrogena, Christian Dior and Anushka to help reduce the appearance of cellulite.





Tried & Tested

Everyone envies the thick, curly hair on my head, but not so when it comes to the hair on my legs. So, after having had no luck with past laser-hair-removal procedures, I decided to try the new Lightsheer Diode laser at the office of Noam Glaser, M.D., medical director of Glaser Dermatology & Laser in Massapequa, N.Y. Each time the laser hit my skin during the two-hour procedure, it stung. Some places hurt more than others (the fewer the follicles, and with each subsequent visit, the less it hurts). Immediately afterward my skin looked a bit red and hivey, though by that evening the redness had disappeared. Glaser explained that some of the hair may look like it's growing back, but that it would fall out within a few weeks or disappear after more sessions. After just two treatments, my hair definitely is thinner – and even completely gone in some places – and I still have two treatments to go. – L.P.

connected to a powerful vacuum) providing an intensive massage. (Call 800-222-3911 for details.)

► **Accept your body.** No matter what you do, it's likely you'll have some dimpling. "Plenty of people who are in good shape still have cellulite," Guida says.

Get Hair Free

Shaving and depilatories remain dependable backups, but laser hair removal is the most high-tech way to zap unwanted hair (see "Tried & Tested," left). The laser emits a beam of light, which is absorbed by the pigment in the hair and transformed into heat that destroys the hair follicle, says Noam Glaser, M.D., a board-certified dermatologist and medical director of Glaser Dermatology & Laser in Massapequa, N.Y. It isn't cheap – up to \$1,000 a session for a full leg – and you'll typically need four to six sessions.

If you don't want to drop thousands on laser hair removal (and are looking for more immediate results), try these fuzz-busting options.

► **Use the right razor.** Dull blades cause more nicks than new ones. And triple blade razors with a moisturizing strip cost more, but give a closer, nick-free shave. Try Gillette MACH3Turbo (\$9; at drugstores).

► **Smooth on rich shaving cream or gel.** Shaving cream creates a lubricated environment for the razor, preventing cuts and leaving skin silky smooth. We love BeneFit Sweet Satin Shave (\$24; benefitcosmetics.com), Skintimate Moisturizing Shave Gel Tropical Splash (\$3; at drugstores) and Philosophy Razor Sharp (\$18; philosophy.com).

► **Experiment with waxing.** Home waxing products have gotten much easier to use. Try the all-natural Aussie Nad's No-Heat Hair Removal Gel (\$30; nads.com), which comes with Kiwi-Chamomile Prep Soap and Smoothing Lotion.

► **Soothe ingrown hairs.** Tend Skin Lotion (\$20; tendskin.com) is a salicylic acid-based product that, when applied post-waxing or shaving, helps those red bumps disappear.

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