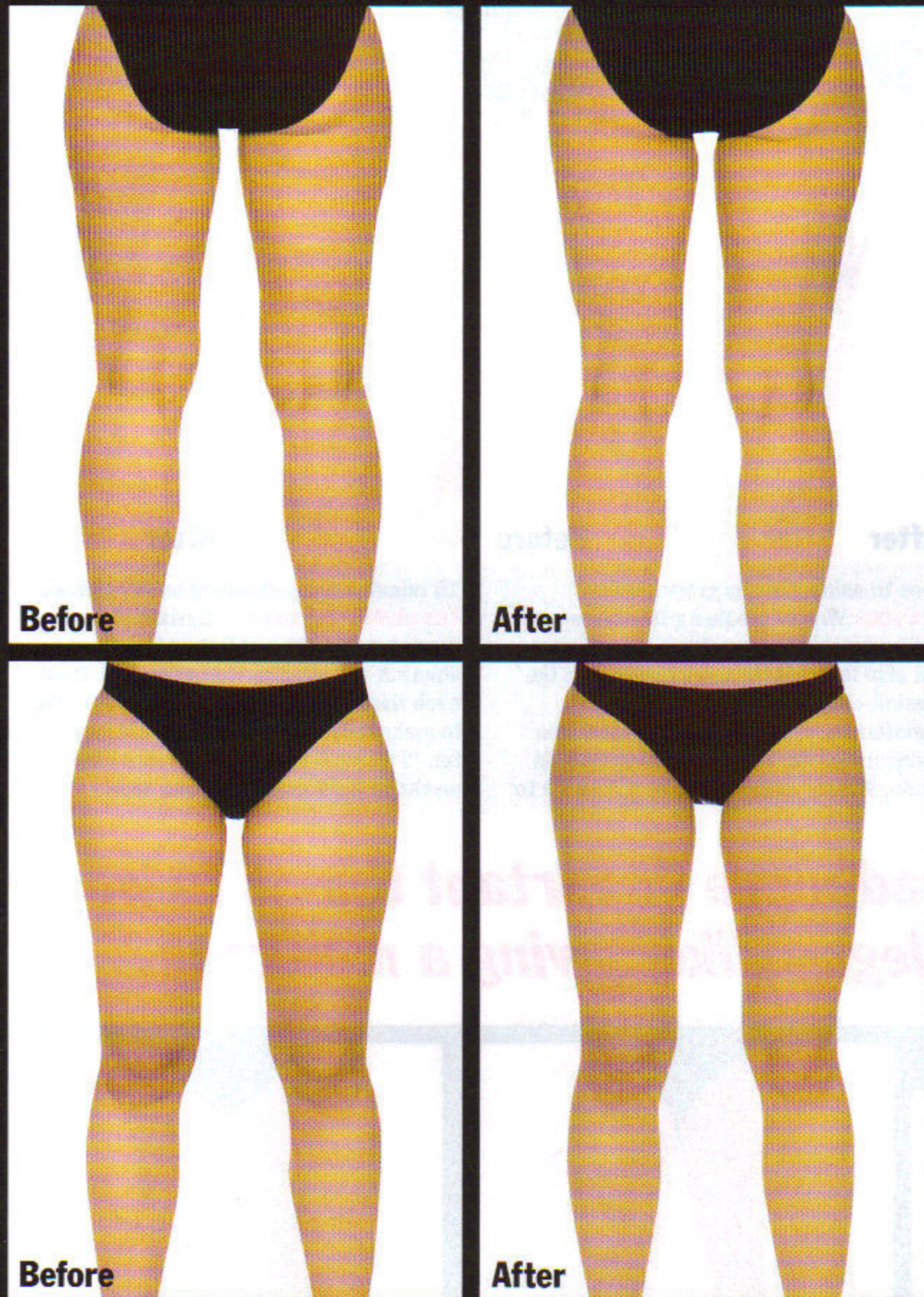


PROBLEM: CELLULITE



Name: Susan*, 23

The expert: Fred Hahn, owner of the Serious Strength Studio in New York City and author of *The Slow Burn Fitness Revolution* (Broadway Books).

The story: "I've had cellulite since I was 14," Susan confesses. "So even though I have a medium build, I've always felt fat." Despite running four days a week for most of her life, Susan still had cellulite on her thighs.

The plan: Hahn immediately ordered Susan off the treadmill—in fact, he instructed her to stop all cardio. "It was getting her nowhere fast in terms of changing her legs," he says. Instead, he put her on his Slow Burn program, two 30-minute workouts per week of strength training, no aerobics. Each repetition is done in a very slow and controlled motion (roughly ten seconds) to use muscle, not momentum. "There is no set number

of reps—you lift until you can't move the weight another inch, which is usually between three and six reps," Hahn explains. He also streamlined Susan's diet by cutting high-carbohydrate bread and alcohol, as well as emphasizing healthy protein and fats.

The eight-week results: "At first, people noticed that I was walking funny for two days after each session," Susan says. But two weeks later, they started noticing something else: how baggy her jeans were. In total, she dropped five pounds and a full pants size. The cellulite is not completely gone, "but my thighs are firmer, so what I have is not as noticeable," Susan says. She's eager to stick with the program. "I was surprised how much I didn't miss the cardio," she says. "Weight training helped me lose weight faster, and I didn't have to spend a lot of time at the gym."

Leggy Reality

"Darling, my legs aren't so beautiful," Marlene Dietrich once said. "I just know what to do with them." How very modest of the late screen legend. Those not blessed with fine German engineering, however, have to do quite a lot to change their lower halves, says Robyn Stuhr, exercise physiologist at the Women's Sports Medicine Center at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City.

"Exercise and diet can make your legs leaner and stronger," she says. "But ultimately, you're working within a set genetic range." That range is particularly restrictive for women hoping to kick their saddlebags. "When most women lose weight through diet and exercise, they lose fat everywhere on their body before the hips and thighs begin to budge," she says.

"You have to be persistent and realize that the results won't come in eight weeks." And unfortunately some women won't lose those saddlebags completely "unless they get to dangerously low body-fat levels." Muscle mass (whether you want to build or debulk) requires the same determination, but with even spottier results. "Women with a stocky build are naturally muscular," Stuhr says, which makes the ballerina look impossible to replicate. Whereas lean women "can lift weights till the cows come home and they won't get muscular." That means a lithe and lanky woman trying to build up her calves has to struggle to increase muscle mass, Stuhr says. "I'm talking two hours in the gym, lots of sets, lots of reps, multiple exercises for the same body part to get definition." Most sane people, she admits, "have other things to do with their lives." —THERESA O'ROURKE