

# Knockout paunch? Rodial Tummy Tuck wins fans

BY [NICOLE LYN PESCE](#)

Can you really rub away flab?

One miracle serum promises to whittle your middle by doing just that. Rodial Tummy Tuck has become something of a fat-phobe phenomenon, despite its eyebrow-raising claims.

When 3 million viewers saw a local mom show off her new belly on the "[Rachael Ray Show](#)" recently (she lost 6 inches in eight weeks), the cream sold out almost immediately.



Blissworld.com sold more Tummy Tuck this March than in March 2008, despite the struggling economy (and a hefty \$130 price tag). Last week, Rodial relaunched its Web site in the [U.K.](#) to offer prices in [U.S.](#) dollars while also increasing production of Tummy Tuck to meet rising demand across the globe.

So how does it supposedly work? The tightener promises to reduce waistlines by 2 centimeters in two months, thanks to a stomach-flattening formula that uses microfibers to condense cells and firm the skin, plus natural proteins like neuro-peptides, fig extract and caffeine to boost cell metabolism and break down fat.

"You get instant results, an instant tightening effect, the minute you apply it," boasts [Maria Hatzistefanis](#), founder and owner of Rodial. "This is the first time these ingredients have been put together in one formula. The feedback that we have seen has been amazing."

The pricey serum sounds too good to be true, yet local ladies claim the wonder cream really works.

[Karen Barke](#), 39, from [Carmel](#), N.Y., is the one who started it all. "I've been fairly thin my whole life, but for some reason, I have my gut, and it only seemed to get worse when I had my daughter," she says.

So when she was given the opportunity to test the Rodial Tummy Tuck on "[Rachael Ray](#)," she jumped at the chance.

"I thought, hmmm, how could a cream really work?" she says. "But I lost 6 inches! Which is insane!"

"My stomach used to have a puckery look, but now it looks more toned and the skin is softer," she says. "I always used to wear baby-dolls [blouses] that were loose around the waist. Now I'm mostly wearing tight shirts. My pants seem to fit better."

And the busy mother of a 3-year-old insists that she wasn't hitting the gym.

"Honestly, I didn't exercise once," she says. "The whole thing is, I'm a busy single mom, and I really didn't have time!"

Her unprecedented tummy trim inspired [Ruth Herries](#), an assistant at Beauty by Mary Schook in midtown, to test the cream for her employer.

"I don't do creams or fads or anything," says Herries, 40, from [Woodside](#). "But this looked so promising. My stomach has gone to the dogs in the past year."

She's used it for only a little more than a week but has already noticed a difference. "It seems to have firmed up my stomach," she says. "My bellybutton is placed higher. Before, it was kind of scrunched down and quite flabby. Now, just looking at it, it seems to have lifted up somewhat. The skin around the stomach is firming."

"I'm definitely glad I tried it," she says. "I will continue using it until the bottle is gone."

Her colleague, [Fiona McCormack](#), 34, is also giving Tummy Tuck a try. "I've only been using it five days, and I think it's working, but it's also a bit too soon to tell," she cautions. "But I have already noticed a very slight tightening in the skin."

While these three cite positive results, local dermatologist [Dr. Ariel Ostad](#), an assistant clinical professor at the [NYU Medical Center Department of Dermatology](#), questions the miracle cure.

"Science has shown that, definitely, caffeine and neuropeptides can have a temporary effect in tightening your collagen fibers as well as constricting blood vessels, which can tighten skin," he says.

"I'm sure this product probably helps smooth the complexion, and it can give you an instant tightening effect, but it's not a permanent solution. You would have to use this for the rest of your life."

Rodial reps insist the product is best used to tighten problem areas, like the paunch left over after a pregnancy and not for dramatic weight loss.

"No amount of Tummy Tuck is going to help you lose your tummy if you're gaining weight," says Hatzistefanis. "The formula assumes that your diet is straightforward.

That's advice that Ostad agrees with.

"For someone with obesity, or someone who wants to lose weight, it's really about exercise and proper lifestyle changes, or doing some sort of surgical procedure," he says.