



An Everyday Guide to Acne

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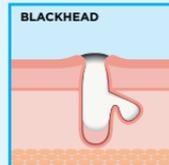
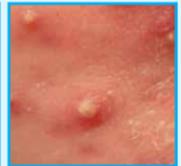
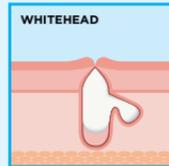
What is acne?

What causes acne?

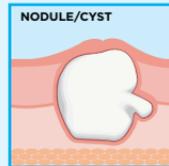
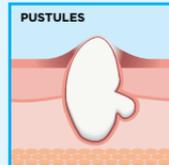
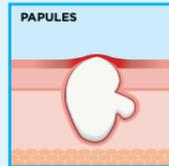
What are the types of acne?

Acne is the most common skin disorder, affecting 40-50 million Americans and roughly 85-95% of teenage boys and girls.¹ Acne is an inflammatory skin condition that involves increased oil (or sebum) production, clogging of the pores (often referred to as follicular hyperkeratinization), the growth of *P. acnes* bacteria and inflammation. In fact, more recent research suggests that underlying inflammation may be the source of acne, instead of hyperkeratinization, which was originally thought to be the cause. All of these factors contribute to the acne cycle that causes blemishes. Traditionally, we think of non-inflammatory acne and inflammatory acne. Non-inflammatory lesions include blackheads (open comedones) and whiteheads (closed comedones). Inflammatory acne is characterized by papules, pustules, cysts, and nodules. Often these two types exist together.

NON INFLAMMATORY ACNE



INFLAMMATORY ACNE



¹ Joint report of the American Academy of Dermatology Association and the Society for Investigative Dermatology. *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology* 2006;55:490-500.

Top 10 Q&A

- 1 Is it my diet?** Studies indicate too much sugar and dairy in your diet can lead to break outs. Most dermatologists do not recommend limiting dairy for adolescents and young adults because they are forming bone mass during this period. Overall, eating a well-balanced, healthy diet is beneficial for both your body and your face.
- 2 My prom/event/dance is in two weeks- what can I do to clear up my acne now?** It takes six to eight weeks to see improvement from typical prescription medications. Topical medications may even take longer, so it's best to start treatment as soon as possible. The use of non-comedogenic foundation, or tinted moisturizer, can help while the treatment starts working. Clear skin takes work, maintenance and patience.
- 3 Will popping my pimples help them clear faster?** No, popping your pimples can cause abnormal pressure on the inflamed follicle and cause scarring. In the event of a painful, swollen pimple, see your dermatologist for a steroid injection that can help minimize the blemish within 24 to 48 hours.
- 4 Do I need a daily skincare regimen if I only have occasional breakouts?** Establishing good skincare habits will help you maintain healthy skin now and as you get older. As acne progresses, it can be more difficult to get under control and very expensive to repair. Be sure to visit a dermatologist if over-the-counter treatments are not effective.
- 5 I don't get enough sleep... Can that make my acne worse?** Yes, a lack of sleep can affect your acne. Your body repairs itself at night, and not getting enough sleep can increase a stress hormone called cortisol that has been linked to acne.
- 6 Is it ok if I occasionally fall asleep with makeup on?** No, it is not okay to sleep with makeup on. This can lead to clogged pores, blackheads, whiteheads and a dull complexion.
- 7 The sun seems to dry out my pimples. Is this true?** While it may seem like the sun helps your skin, it is actually very harmful. UVA rays are responsible for aging and skin cancer. UVB rays cause sunburn and darkening of the skin. The sun suppresses your immune system, which can temporarily minimize pimples. But, the sun does more harm than good to your skin.
- 8 Is it ok to use my body wash as my facial cleanser?** No. If you suffer from breakouts, you should use a facial cleanser formulated with ingredients that treat acne. Facial skin is more sensitive than body skin, so your cleanser needs to have to proper pH as well.
- 9 My friend experienced side effects from going on Isotretinoin. Is it true it is a dangerous drug?** Isotretinoin is the most serious of all the medications prescribed for acne. When prescribed properly, and taken under the care of a physician, it remains the best option for improving severe, cystic acne.
- 10 Will tea tree oil or other essential oils improve my acne?** There is limited scientific evidence that these oils improve acne. There are no large-scale, randomized, placebo-controlled studies showing that they work.

Healthy Skincare Tips

Cleanse your face daily. Cleansing the skin removes makeup, debris and sweat from the day, which may contribute to clogged pores and breakouts.

Treat your whole face. When you treat the entire face, you are preventing new lesions from forming everywhere. Plus, using a retinol or retinoid on the whole face helps with texture, pores and fine lines.

Be consistent with OTC and RX treatments. It typically takes 6-8 weeks to notice improvement with a topical regimen – either over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription treatments. Consistency is the key.

Apply a dose of patience. Occasionally, when you first begin treatment, the body is starting to clear the acne and you may still experience a flare up. Over time, this should resolve. Sticking to your regimen should keep the skin clear on a consistent basis.

Treating Acne

- For blackheads and whiteheads (the earliest stage of acne), use products designed to unclog pores that include salicylic acid and micronized benzoyl peroxide.
- Topical prescription retinoids (such as tretinoin cream) can help with more advanced cases of blackheads and whiteheads. There are multiple retinoids on the market and they are typically used in conjunction with other topical treatments, such as benzoyl peroxide and salicylic acid to maximize results.
- For larger papules, pustules and nodules, a prescription oral antibiotic can help calm inflammation while working internally to reduce the bacteria responsible for acne. If you have acne on the face, neck, chest and back, it's often easier to take a tablet than apply topical medication to all affected areas.
- Hormones play a role in female adult acne (ages 25-45). Birth control pills have been shown to be as effective as prescription oral antibiotics for the treatment of acne in women.
- For cystic nodules and lesions that leave scars, oral isotretinoin is the gold standard to heal acne and have a lasting impact on the skin. There are multiple side effects to this drug, and it must be prescribed by a dermatologist under strict supervision.

To learn more and get all the facts about acne,
visit BeClearBootcamp.com





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Common Myths About Acne

1 Using skincare products that contain oil will cause breakouts.

This isn't necessarily true, especially with products such as facial oils, coconut oil and tea tree oil. It depends on your skin type and if you are prone to acne. In acne-prone individuals, facial oils can clog pores and lead to blackheads and whiteheads. If you have dry skin, facial oil can promote hydration and lock in moisture.

2 Using sunscreen will cause me to break out.

Certain sunscreens can be too thick or greasy for acne-prone skin. A sheer, lightweight sunscreen such as La Roche Posay's Anthelios Clear Skin can be worn under foundation. It may take some trial and error to find the right sunscreen, but it's worth it for preventing both skin cancer and signs of aging.

3 Poor hygiene leads to acne.

Acne is not caused by poor hygiene or dirty skin. The use of harsh scrubs and exfoliants can lead to irritation, redness and can even worsen acne by increasing oil. Use a gentle cleanser two times per day.

4 You will grow out of acne.

Acne can occur at any age, and the best time to start treating it is now. Waiting only increases the chances of scarring.

5 I can 'sweat out' my acne.

Some studies suggest that heat, humidity and steam rooms can actually worsen acne.

True or False?

All topical medications for acne cause irritation, redness and flaking.

TRUE **FALSE**

Many topical treatments available now have patient tolerability in mind, and are designed to minimize irritation.

Adults over the age of 50 can get acne.

TRUE **FALSE**

Acne can develop at any age. While it is less common after age 50, it is still possible to develop blemishes.

Over-the-counter medications are not as good as prescription.

TRUE **FALSE**

There are many over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications that are as safe and effective as prescription drugs. In fact, several over-the-counter acne treatments were once only available by prescription.



Dr. Kristel Polder

is a board-certified dermatologist and skin care expert specializing in general medical dermatology, laser procedures, facial rejuvenation, injectables and non-surgical body contouring. She is the co-author of the book "Beautiful Skin Revealed: The Ultimate Guide to Better Skin" and serves as Clinical Assistant Professor for the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School.