

Back to School With a Clear Face



By Adel Haque, MD

4 myths about treating acne

There are 4 common myths that many people believe regarding obtaining, preventing or getting rid of acne.

Myth 1. Acne is caused by dirt. Acne flare-ups have not been traced to dirt or poor hygiene. In fact, washing too frequently or scrubbing too vigorously can irritate skin and make acne worse.

Myth 2. Acne is caused by bad thoughts. Puberty is a time of changes for teenagers, and sometimes they start to become overwhelmed by their feelings. Sometimes teenagers will even start blaming these normal feelings and changes for their bad skin, and that's simply not true. These changes are completely normal and so are teens' thoughts and behaviors.

Myth 3. The more you put on the better. The more products you use to rid your face of acne, the more damage you can cause. Scrubbing your face too hard can aggravate your acne, and using alcohol-based astringents can dry out the skin.

Myth 4. Heavily scented moisturizers are okay to use. While keeping the face moisturized helps with acne, certain moisturizers should be avoided. When choosing a moisturizer, opt for creams and lotions but make sure they have beneficial and noncomedogenic ingredients. Avoid choosing heavily scented moisturizers. Fragrance-heavy products might result in blotchy and itchy skin.

Dermatologist product information:

Since all skin types and conditions are different, it is highly recommended to make an appointment to see your dermatologist. The dermatologists at each of the Dermatology Partners 22 offices can help ensure that you use the proper product to treat acne.

When you go the drug store, all of the product choices can become overwhelming. As a dermatologist, I recommend a few different products. Benzoyl peroxide aids in attacking

bacteria and unclogging pores by removing dead skin to prevent blockages. Salicylic acid is well known for reducing acne by exfoliating the skin and keeping pores clear. Salicylic acid can be found in a variety of over-the-counter (OTC) products. This product works best for mild acne (blackheads and whiteheads), and it can also help prevent future breakouts. OTC Differin (also known as Adapalene) works by increasing the turnover of skin cells. This aids the natural exfoliation of the surface layer of skin and helps to unblock the pores and sebaceous glands, allowing the sebum to escape. All of these products are over the counter and can be found at your local drug store.

Cleanliness counseling

To maintain a regimen that can help prevent breakouts and clear them up as fast as possible, here are some of my tips.

1. Try washing your face twice a day with warm water and a mild soap designated for acne use. While washing, massage your face in a circular motion and avoid scrubbing.
2. If you participate in an after-school sport or activity, try wearing dry, loose-fitting and absorbent clothing. Change out of wet and sweaty clothing as soon as possible.
3. If you are wearing makeup throughout the day, remove it before going to sleep. When purchasing makeup products, choose brands that say noncomedogenic or nonacnegenic on the label.
4. If you wear glasses or sunglasses, make sure you clean them frequently to keep oil from clogging the pores around your eyes and nose.

5. Keeping your hair clean and out of your face helps to prevent additional dirt and oil from clogging your pores.
6. If acne begins to cause scarring or self-consciousness and confidence issues, I recommend speaking with a dermatologist.

Dr. Haque is known for listening to his patients and spending lots of time getting to know them and their dermatologic conditions and also looking at them holistically. You can learn more about Dr. Haque by visiting www.dermpartners.com. Follow us on Facebook to stay up to date with our latest features and services. You can also call (888)-895-3376 to schedule your appointment today in one of Dermatology Partners 22 conveniently located offices or with Dr. Haque in Yardley.

Acne and returning back to school can be tough on a teenager. As a result, the summer is often seen as a chance for a fresh start before heading back to school.

Acne affects about 85% of people between the ages of 12 and 24 and is the most common skin condition in the United States, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. Acne most often starts at around age 11 for girls and age 13 for boys. Teens are more prone to getting acne because of the hormonal changes that come with puberty.

The most common type of acne that a lot of teens get is called acne vulgaris. This type of acne usually shows up on the face, neck, shoulders, upper back and chest. The hair follicles, or pores, in your skin contain sebaceous glands (oil glands). These glands make sebum, which is an oil that lubricates your hair and skin. As the body begins to mature and develop, hormones stimulate the sebaceous glands to make more sebum. Pores begin to become clogged if there is an overproduction of sebum and too many dead skin cells. Bacteria can then get trapped inside the pores and multiply. This causes swelling and redness, which is the beginning of acne. A whitehead develops if a pore gets clogged up and closes but bulges out from the skin. A blackhead develops if a pore gets clogged up but stays open; the top surface will darken.

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