

Skin Sense

facts from the experts

What Parents Should Know About Acne

(NAPSA)—If you're the parent of a teenager who suffers from acne or knows someone who does, you're not alone. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, nearly all teenagers, between the ages of 12 and 17, have had an occasional acne related breakout. In addition, close to half of these mid-teens require professional treatment for their acne.

What causes acne?

Acne is caused when pores become blocked by too much oil, dead skin cells or bacteria. The pores swell, forming blackheads, whiteheads and pimples, which may become inflamed and infected. Bacteria are often the cause of inflammation, making the pimple red, sore and occasionally full of pus.

Particularly in teens, acne is often caused by hormones, while stress can also be a reason for breakouts. Although a strong scientific link between genetics and acne has not yet been made, some studies have shown that people with a genetic predisposition to acne (parents had acne as teens) are often more susceptible to the condition.

Myths and facts about acne

Throughout the years many myths about the cause and prevention of acne have evolved. Some of these myths include eating an unhealthy diet or foods high in fat and sugar, poor hygiene, wearing make-up and spreading the acne from one part of the body to another by touch. Healthy eating and cleansing the face twice daily are both beneficial for general well-being, but no scientific claims or evidence have linked these practices to the prevention of acne. Of course wearing oil-free make-up is always best in order to avoid clogging the pores, and acne is not contagious so it cannot be spread by contact.

How can acne be treated?

It is recommended that people with acne cleanse their face twice daily, use non-comedogenic (non-pore-clogging) products, remember to keep hands away from the face and never "squeeze" the acne.



Benzoyl peroxide products are the first line of therapy recommended by doctors to fight acne.

It is also best to avoid grease and certain clothing that might irritate the condition and worsen breakouts. In addition, talk to a dermatologist about therapies such as benzoyl peroxide, which is recognized by the American Academy of Dermatology as being one of the most effective anti-acne agents.

The newest method of delivering benzoyl peroxide treatment comes in the form of a pad, sold as Triaz[®] Pads. "The pads are a particularly good option for teens because they offer the flexibility and convenience that they need with busy schedules of school, sports, hobbies and the like," says Jeanine Downie, M.D., image Dermatology P.C., Montclair, New Jersey. In a recent survey, 87 percent of teenagers with acne agreed that portability and convenience were key reasons in their preference for Triaz Pads.

Triaz Pads, a prescription product, also includes other important ingredients that help to make the medication more effective: Glycolic acid to exfoliate dead skin cells that might interfere with acne treatment, C-12-C15 alkyl benzoate to help medication penetrate the skin, and zinc lactate which soothes the skin and reduces irritation and redness.

To learn more about Triaz Pads and other acne therapies, visit your dermatologist.