



Pediatric Clinic
 PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUTS
 ACNE

Acne is a problem of the oil glands of the skin known as sebaceous glands. Normally sebaceous glands provide oil to keep the skin smooth. During the teenage years, there is an increase in oil production. In some people the oil glands become plugged, causing acne. Acne usually occurs on the face, back shoulders, and chest. It can begin as early as 8 or 9 years of age and is usually worse in girls in their mid teens and boys in their late teens. While varying factors can make acne worse there is no evidence that chocolate, soda pop, or fatty foods are bad for acne. If you find certain foods you eat make you break out, then those foods should be avoided.

ACNE TREATMENT

You should wash with a gentle soap (such as Dove or Neutrogena) of your choice 2-3 times a day to remove the greasiness off your skin. Try to avoid harsh soaps, astringents, or scrubs which will irritate the skin. Remember, acne is not caused by dirt and cannot be scrubbed away. The treatment prescribed for your acne must be done on a daily basis to see improvement. The first signs of improvement are usually in about one month.

Medication applied to the skin to treat acne include benzoyl peroxide gels and antibiotics in liquid, gel, or pad form. These products reduce the number of bacteria on the skin. Retin-A creams and gels may also be applied to the skin to prevent the formation of plugged pores. Retin-A may cause redness and peeling and should be used carefully according to your doctor's directions. While using Retin-A, your skin may become very sensitive to the sun, so sunscreen should always be used. It is common for acne to temporarily worsen when first starting medications, and then improve after several weeks. If your acne will not respond to topically applied medication, your doctor may prescribe pills for you.

To treat your acne effectively this is what you should do:

1. Apply _____ each morning
 _____ after school
 _____ at bedtime
2. Take _____ each morning
 _____ after school
 _____ at bedtime
3. Additional Instructions: