

Acne

Information and Tips

- Unknown causes: Food, chocolate, and stress have never been scientifically proven. So, if you notice something that makes your acne worse, it may be a trigger and try to avoid this item.
- Acne may resolve in time, but it can also be long lasting or recurring.
- All acne medications cause dry skin and makes you sunburn easily, even on cloudy days make sure to wear your sunscreen.
- Avoid astringents, alcohol, or toners, as these products dry out the skin in combination with your medications.
- Mineral make-ups may have nickel that worsen break outs, try nickel free brands such as Jane Iredale, Color Science, Glo or Young Blood.

******_If you are pregnant, planning to get pregnant or breastfeeding, please notify the provider because many topical and oral acne medications are not safe during pregnancy. Your obstetrician must approve of all medications you take or use during pregnancy.**

Topical Medications

All topical products have a potential for irritation. If you develop excessive dryness, redness, rash or hives, stop the medication immediately. The goal is to gently dry the over-oily areas, but not to cause too much irritation that can actually make your acne worse. If you are not tolerating any of the products, please call so that they can be adjusted. There are hundreds of products available and we can find the right combination for you.

AZELAIC ACID (Finacea, Azelex) may cause irritation, so apply moisturizer first then apply this medication.

BENZOYL PEROXIDE containing products (Acanya, Triaz, Benzac, BenzaClin, Duac, Oxy, Pro-Active, Clean&Clear 3-in-1 Exfoliating Cleanser, Neutrogena Clear Pore) can bleach your clothing or towels so rinse well. For some people, they can cause significant dryness, irritation or allergy.

CLINDAMYCIN (Acanya, Cleocin, BenzaClin, Duac, Evoclin, Veltin, Ziana) may rarely cause diarrhea in some people.

DAPSONE (Aczone) is fairly new for acne. It is very gentle and typically used twice daily, works well for the red or painful inflamed acne, also seems to help reduce the discoloration associated with the red acne bumps.

RETINOIDS (Tretinoin, Retin-A Micro, Differin, Tazorac, Ziana, Atralin, Veltin) are generally the most potentially irritating topical medications. However, they are extremely important in unclogging pores and fighting blackheads and whiteheads. Apply a VERY THIN LAYER (a pea-sized amount should be enough for the entire face). They cause exfoliation of the skin and push everything out of the surface so your skin may actually feel bumpier for the first couple of weeks. You need to stick with it! If you are getting too red/flaky/dry, you can apply moisturizer to the dry areas. Also, you can use it every other day or every third night, whichever your skin can tolerate. YOU MUST WEAR SUNSCREEN when using these products, they can really make your skin sensitive in the sun.

SALICYLIC AND GLYCOLIC ACID (Neutrogena Oil-Free Acne Wash, Glytone) are found in many over the counter products and may cause irritation in people with sensitive skin.

SODIUM SULFACETAMIDE/SULFUR containing products (AVAR, Plexion, Klaron, Novacet, Rosula, Clenia, Sumaxin) can sometimes be irritating or contain a slight odor.



Oral Prescription Medications

ACUTANE (Absorica, Amnesteem, Claravis, Isotretinoin, Myorisan, Sotret) Serious medicine for acne. Many potential side effects. Absolutely CANNOT GET PREGNANT! Can be extremely effective, but you must follow instructions very carefully, agree to monthly visits with blood draws and comply with the iPledge program.

BIRTH CONTROL PILLS (ORTHO-TRI-CYCLEN, YASMIN, YAZ) Avoid smoking, do not use if you have history of blood clots and may cause weight gain or mood disturbance. See primary care doctor or gynecologist for routine exams.

DOXYCYCLINE (ADOXA, DORYX, ORACEA, MONODOX) Take with food (can cause severe upset stomach) and a full glass of liquid. Do not lie down immediately after taking because you can get bad heartburn. Wear sunscreen daily, this medication will cause you to burn!

MINOCYCLINE (DYNACIN, SOLODYN) One of the most effective of the oral antibiotics, but also with the most potential side effects. Can cause dizziness, headaches or upset stomach. Take with food (can cause severe nausea) and a full glass of liquid. After 2-5 years with continual use, a blue discoloration of the gums and skin scars may develop. You should be off minocycline for one month before having laser treatment.

SPIRONOLACTONE Can affect potassium level and blood pressure, may cause headaches. May not be safe in people with a strong family history of breast cancer. Routine blood work will be needed before and while on this medication.

Photodynamic Therapy

PDT (Blue Light Therapy) Is an in office light procedure, using visible light in combination with Levulan (ALA) – the oil glands absorb Levulan after one hour and then visible (blue) light exposure causes the oil glands to heat up and shrink. The day after PDT you need to stay indoors with no lights on as the Levulan stays in the skin for 24-36 hours and you can burn.

****** Not covered by insurance. Cost \$800 for a recommended 3 sessions every 4 weeks.**

Common Acne Regimen

- Wash face no more than twice a day with either a prescribed acne cleanser or a fragrance-free moisturizing cleanser, then gently pat dry.
- After washing, moisturize the entire face (avoid near the eyes) with an oil free or non-comedogenic facial moisturizer. Recommending a moisturizer with an SPF 30 or more in the AM.
- Then apply a pea-sized amount of topical to the whole face or other acne area like chest or back at bedtime, unless otherwise directed.
- Any orals given should be taken with food or as otherwise directed to reduce risk of nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

Expectations

Be aware that it may take up to 2-3 months to see a 60-80% improvement of acne with proper usage of the medication(s).

Contact Office

If acne worsens or fails to improve despite months of treatment, develops new scars, significantly more nodules or cysts.

