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By: Carmen Ivanov, Associate Editor



[Home Treatment for Acne Vulgaris](#)

Help yourself reduce acne flare-ups

Acne vulgaris (acne) is a common skin condition that occurs when oil and dead skin cells clog the skin's pores. These clogs cause blemishes in the skin that are often red and swollen. When you have just a few red spots, known as pimples, you have a mild form of acne. Severe acne can mean hundreds of pimples that can cover the face, neck, chest, and back. While mild acne is merely annoying, severe acne can lead to emotional and physical scars. Acne most often affects teens; more than 85% develop at least a mild form of this condition. Most people outgrow acne by their early 20s, though some—mostly women—can have acne into their 40s or 50s. There are different types of acne. The most common acne is the type that develops during the teen years. Puberty causes hormone levels to rise, especially testosterone. High hormones signal skin glands to start making more oil (sebum). Oil releases from the pores to protect the skin and keep it moist. Acne begins when oil mixes with dead cells and clogs the skin's pores. Bacteria can grow in this mixture, and if it leaks into nearby tissues, it causes swelling, redness, and pus. A common name for these raised bumps is pimples. Certain medications can cause acne to develop. This type of acne usually clears up when you stop taking the medication. It isn't just teens who are affected by acne. Sometimes newborns have acne because their mothers pass hormones to them just before delivery. Acne can also appear when the stress of birth causes the baby's body to release hormones on its own. Young children and older adults also may get acne.

Home Treatment Treatment at home can help reduce acne flare-ups. Wash your face (or other affected skin) gently once or twice a day. Do not squeeze pimples, because that often leads to infections, worse acne, and scars. Use water-based skin care products that gently clean your skin. Avoid products such as milky cleansers, cold creams, lipsticks, and lip glosses that contain oils. Use nonprescription medicated creams, soaps, lotions, and gels to treat your acne. Always read the label carefully to make sure you are using the product correctly. Examples of some nonprescription products used to treat acne include: Benzoyl peroxide (Benoxyl, Benzac, Clearasil), which unplugs pores, Alpha-hydroxy acid, which dries up blemishes and causes the top skin layer to peel. You'll find alpha-hydroxy acid in moisturizers, cleansers, eye creams, and sunscreens, Salicylic acid (Clearasil, Propa pH, Stri-Dex), which dries up blemishes and causes the top skin layer to peel, Tea tree oil, which kills bacteria. You'll find tea tree oil in gels, creams, and oils. Other products that may help your overall skin condition include skin pore-cleaning strips. When you peel off these bandagelike strips from your skin, dirt and makeup stick to the strip.

Prevention While you cannot prevent acne, there are steps you can take at home to keep it from getting worse. Gently wash and care for your skin every day. Avoid scrubbing too hard or washing too often. Avoid heavy sweating if you think it causes your acne to get worse. Wash soon after activities that cause you to sweat. Wash your hair often if your hair is oily. Try to keep your hair off of your face. Avoid hair care products such as gels, mousses, cream rinses, and pomades that contain a lot of oil. Avoid touching your face. Wear soft, cotton clothing or moleskin under sports equipment. Parts of equipment, such as chin straps, can rub your skin and make your acne worse. Avoid exposure to oils and harsh chemicals, such as petroleum. Avoid long periods of time in sunlight, as this doesn't help acne and can increase your risk of skin cancer. Use sunscreens when you are out in the sun.