

A GUIDE FOR PREVENTING AND TREATING ACNE

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According to NIAMS nearly 17 million people in the United States have acne, making it the most common skin disease in this country. Acne is actually an inflammatory skin disease that affects the small pores and their attached oil glands on your face, back, arms and chest. Acne is caused by a combination of elements such as physical irritation, environmental pollutants, hormones, genetics, prescription medications, oil-based cosmetics and even stress. Blemishes can be caused by dead skin cells that block the pores where hairs come out and cause eruptions. Breakouts also occur when too much oil is produced by the sebaceous (oil) gland, causing an oily complexion.

Mild acne, referred to as acne vulgaris, is the most common form of the disease and includes blackheads, whiteheads, pustules and papules, with resulting redness and inflammation. Severe acne is characterized by large cysts and nodules and may last for months. If you have severe acne, consulting with a dermatologist (skin doctor) is advisable.

To avoid getting mild acne, first make sure to wash your face with a gentle cleanser two to three times a day and dry off with a soft, clean towel. Avoid harsh soaps or cleanser with chemicals that could strip your skin of essential oils and disrupt its natural balance. Botanical cleansers with salicylic acid can dissolve surface oils and help to cleanse deep down within the pore.

An astringent should be used after washing to control oily skin and lower the

pH of your face. Using an astringent also remove any traces of dirt or cleanser that could remain on your skin. An astringent works by actually reducing oil and water content in your skin to shrink superficial tissues. It is important to choose an astringent that is free of harsh ingredients, such as alcohol, that could strip your skin of essential oils.

To prevent acne, never pop or squeeze pimples. This can make pus go back into your pores, causing swelling, redness and even scarring. Keep your fingers away from your face to avoid spreading dirt and germs. Make sure that everything that touches your face is clean, such as your pillowcases and blankets. Replace pillows frequently to ensure their cleanliness. Keep your hair off your face and avoid sticky hair gels and sprays that could clog the pores around your hairline and create eruptions.

Scientifically speaking, bacteria can also contribute toward the occurrence of breakouts. The number of *P. acnes* bacteria on your skin and their activity varies according to nutrient supply, oxygen supply and pH. *P. acnes* has the ability to produce inflammatory mediators and active enzymes that can contribute to acne activity.

Diet is also a factor in preventing acne. The American Academy of Dermatology determined that, "A healthy diet is important for improving raw materials for healthy skin". Planning healthy, well-balanced meals can improve your overall health as well as the appearance of your skin. Vitamin A, Vitamin B-6, Omega-3 fatty acids, Zinc and other essential vitamins, minerals and nutrients all contribute to the well-being of your skin.

Including Vitamin A with carotenoids in your diet strengthens the protective tissue of the skin, reduces oil production and helps to maintain and repair skin tissue. Foods that naturally contain Vitamin A include carrots, parsley, tomatoes and

apricots.

Consuming a complex of B vitamins help to maintain healthy skin tone and can even reduce your stress. Vitamin B complexes can be found in foods such as fish, meat, milk, eggs, liver, whole grains, leafy green vegetables, peanuts and avocados.

Vitamin C with bioflavonoids is an antioxidant that aids in about 300 metabolic functions and protects against infection with its antibacterial effect. You can find Vitamin C in foods such as oranges and grapefruits.

Make sure to include Vitamin E in your daily consumption because it a powerful antioxidant that protects your cells from free radicals and prevents cell damage. Vitamin E is found in foods such as broccoli, almonds and vegetable oil.

Another great antioxidant is Zinc, which regulates your oil glands, boosts the immune system and promotes healing. Foods with Zinc include eggs, nuts, mushrooms and whole grains.

Always remember to consume the most common antioxidant of all – water. Water flushes toxins out of your body naturally, so try to drink six to eight glasses of water each.

There are also foods you should avoid to prevent the occurrence of acne. Saturated fats can damage body tissue and cause inflammation, resulting in eruptions. Further, the Chinese believe that heat in the blood stream can aggravate acne and suggest you avoid foods that build up heat in the body, such as coffee or spicy dishes. Internal factors cause imbalances in your body that result in the overproduction of oil, so a low-fat, balanced diet that is rich in nutrients will reflect positively on your skin.

Exercise is another important way to keep your internal balance and avoid acne. Exercise improves your blood circulation as well as the transportation of

oxygen to your skin. Engaging in a regular exercise routine can also reduce your stress and increase your overall well-being, which will ultimately be reflected on your face.

External environmental factors, referred to as extrinsic factors, can also have an impact on the condition of your skin. Excessive exposure to the sun is an extrinsic factor that aids in damaging your skin, accelerates the aging process and can cause external aggravation resulting in blemishes. Cold weather can take its toll on your skin, too. Lower temperatures outside, increased windiness and the fact you are turning up the thermostat in your home can make your skin chapped, flaky, blotchy, and itchy, resulting in "dry" acne. Clothing that is made of irritating fibers or that rubs against your skin can cause external eruptions. It is best to select clothes made from natural materials that allow your skin to breathe to avoid possible breakouts. Environmental pollution can clog and irritate your pores, causing pimples.

The products you use on your skin should be free of substances that could clog your pores and cause acne. Chemicals that cause pore irritation and inflammation include mineral oil, parabens, lanolin and propylene glycol. Avoid using cosmetics, sunscreens and cleansers that contain these ingredients. Women should use make-up that is labeled water-based (not oil-based) and noncomedogenic to avoid clogging the pores. Men should avoid shaving over blemishes, never use dull blades to shave their face and change the blades every two to three shaves. A simple way for both women and men to unclog the pores is to use steam. Boil water in a pot and put a towel around it to hold the steam over your face for a few minutes to loosen debris on your pores.

Despite taking necessary precautions to avoid acne, sometimes an aggravated breakout can occur. Changes in diet, environment and lifestyle can cause an

imbalance that results in skin irritation, redness and eruptions. Even after using an effective cleanser and astringent, you may need to exfoliate your skin to keep it looking its best. Exfoliation removes dead skin cells and prevents them from accumulating to keep your skin healthy. Papaya enzyme is a natural ingredient that gently and effectively dissolves dead skin cells to reveal smoother, clearer skin, restore skin tone and refine skin texture.

Another excellent way to remove dirt and oil that clogs your pores and causes acne is to use a face mask to absorb the impurities in your skin. Natural ingredients are preferable because they do not cause further irritation to your skin. Zinc oxide is a highly effective, soothing mineral complex that is pore-purifying. Witch hazel is a natural astringent that tightens your pores. Another great natural ingredient is sulphur, which dissolves cellular buildup and helps to degrease the skin. Applying a mask is simple and can even be used to spot treat certain areas that are more affected than others.

Taking proper care of your skin and using natural skin treatments will improve the appearance of your skin, along with your self-esteem and overall sense of well-being. You will find that taking extra care of your skin and using the right products will eliminate oiliness, redness, swelling, irritation and blemishes. Take the first step to beautiful skin that is as smooth as porcelain today!

ChinaDollSkin.com currently offers the following 4 products that are good for treating and preventing acne:

[Verattiva Delicate Face Cleansing Soap](#)

[Verattiva Daily Face Treatment](#)

[Verattiva Peel-Off Mask](#)

[Verattiva Face Tonic & Refresher](#)