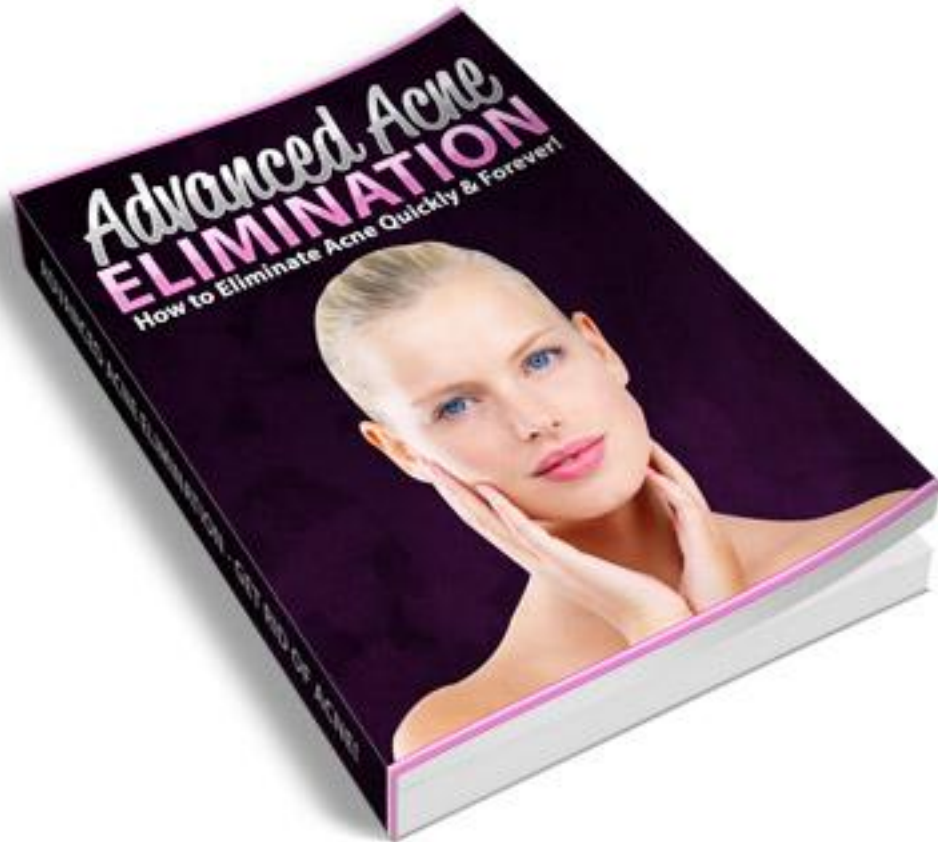

Acne Myths & Misconceptions



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The Truth About Acne

There are so many misconceptions about what exactly causes acne and why certain people suffer from it while others live a blemish-free life, never having to experience the pain from excessive acne.

With these myths and ridiculous notions comes another set of problems. People suffering from acne are so desperate to eliminate it, that they try all sorts of different approaches, from modifying their diet, to over-tanning believing that it will minimize acne permanently.

These methods can end up being detrimental to your attempts at controlling your acne, and in many cases can actually intensify your acne and cause it to get worse. In some cases, these 'instant cure remedies' can end up causing permanent scarring.

So, what is acne really all about?

For starters, regardless of what you've heard, acne is not life threatening and no one has ever died from acne itself. By clinical terms, acne is described as being caused by a hormonal imbalance, clinically coined as 'chronic inflammation', or 'systemic inflammation'.

With chronic inflammation, the primary culprit is poor digestion, accompanied by a poor diet.

Another primary cause of acne is when pores on your body become clogged, typically your face, neck, upper body, back and even chest.

When it comes to the different types of acne, there are five individual categories based on the severity and skin damage caused by acne, including:

Comedos

Papule

Pustule

Nodule

Cyst

Symptoms of acne such as blackheads and whiteheads belong to the comedos category, with cysts being classified as belonging to the nodule category.

Another word for acne is “Acne Vulgaris”, a form of acne, which commonly occurs during puberty.

It primarily affects the back, face and chest. Acne vulgaris affect both teenage boys and girls. Nearly 30-40% of teenage boys are affected between the ages of 18 and 19 years old. Girls are generally affected between the ages of 16-18 years.

Here is how acne is characterized by certain groups that can determine the severity of your acne:

Black Heads

You will suffer from black heads when your pores are partially blocked which allows some the bacteria, dead skin cells and sebum to escape and drain to the surface of your skin.

The dark color that comes with black heads is not dirt and so consistently washing your face will not prevent black heads from appearing. Black heads are firmer and

often take a few days to a week to clear.

White Heads

You will see white heads appear when a pore is completely blocked, the opposite of a black head.

With white heads, they tend to last for only a short length of time and result from sebum, bacteria and dead skin cells being trapped beneath the skins surface.

Papules

These are painful, red bumps that are inflamed and contain no head.

Pustules

A pustule is what we commonly call a “pimple”. They are very similar to a white head but are always inflamed and contain a white or yellow center.

Nodules

Nodules are larger spots that can lasts for months and be difficult to deal with because of how painful they can be. Nodules are hardened bumps beneath the skins surface and with nodules, scarring is quite common.

If you believe that you have nodules, please do not squeeze them as doing so may cause severe trauma to your skin, spreading of nodules, and prolonged life.

Don't try to treat nodules on your own, instead book an appointment with your dermatologist for assistance as nodules are quite difficult to control with over the counter medications or home based remedies.

Cysts

Just like a nodule, cysts can be large and feel hard, in fact, some cysts feel like round balls within the skin.

They are also very painful and are filled with liquid. **Do not squeeze or attempt to break a cyst**, as you can push the bacteria and infection deeper into your skin.

Apart from the common forms of acne that many of us have experienced from time to time throughout our life, there are four types of acne that are considered more severe and should be treated by a doctor.

Acne Conglobata

This is the most severe form of acne, generally characterized by the large appearance of numerous nodules, often connected, interconnected and contains a large number of black heads. Because these lesions can become ulcerated, they can cause disfiguring and severe scarring on the skin surface.

Conglobata is usually found on the face, back, chest, upper arms and thighs.

Acne Conglobata usually affects people between the ages of 18 and 30 and is more common in males.

It should also be noted that Acne Conglobata could stay active for many years, lying dormant until something occurs that causes the acne to resurface. The cause of Acne Conglobata is unknown at this time.

Acne Fulminans

This type of severe acne is actually an abrupt onset of acne conglobata that typically afflicts young men.

The symptoms of the severe *nodulocystic*, often ulcerating acne, are readily apparent. As with normal cases of acne conglobata the lesions cover large portions of the extremities and the facial region, including the disfiguring scars that can eventually develop.

Yet what makes acne fulminans unique in that it also includes fever symptoms, aching of the joints, particularly the knees and hips, and varying degrees of weight loss that depend upon the individual.

Gram Negative Folliculitis

Gram-negative folliculitis is a form of extreme acne caused by an inflammation of the follicles that is caused by bacterial infection:

This condition is characterized by **pustules and cysts**.

It has been determined in some cases that its development is caused by a complication resulting from a long-term antibiotic treatment of acne vulgaris.

The reason that this form of acne is called “gram-negative” relates to the fact that gram is a type of blue stain used for laboratory testing for microscopic organism. Bacteria that do not stain blue are referred to as “gram-negative.”

Like other forms of extreme or severe acne, gram-negative folliculitis is a rare condition, and we do not know whether it is more common in males or females as it has been documented in both.

Pyoderma Faciale

This type of severe acne affects only females, usually between the ages of 20 to 40 years of age.

It is characterized by large painful nodules, pustules and sores that may leave scarring.

Forming abruptly, pyoderma faciale may occur on the skin of a woman who has never had acne before.

Generally, this type of extreme acne is confined to the face, and though it does not last longer than a year, it can cause a great deal of damage in a very short time.

Keloidalis is a scar-like acne that can become present in both male and females, however is most prevalent among men.

Keloidalis commonly affects the neck area. When the inflamed papules and pustules grow into larger cysts and nodules, the skin gets very greasy leading to atrophic scars and keloids on the neck, shoulders and upper back.

Other types of acne include:

*Acne Rosacea - Most common in the elderly and is characterized by red rashes on the chin, nose, cheek and forehead.

*Acne Conglobata - This is a highly inflammatory disease with comedones, nodules, abscesses, and draining sinus tracts.

*Acne Fulminans - is a severe form of the skin disease, acne, which can occur after unsuccessful treatment for another form of acne such as acne conglobata.

Acne usually occurs during the teenage years of a person's life, however, adults are not immune to acne, and many of us, who fail to treat it can end up suffering from it our entire lives.

Many of the problems facing those who are trying to deal with acne are the pervasive sources of misinformation out there regarding the causes of acne.

With these myths and ridiculous notions comes another set of problems. People suffering from acne are so desperate to eliminate it, that they try all sorts of different approaches, from modifying their diet, to over-tanning believing that it will minimize acne permanently.

These methods can end up being detrimental to your attempts at controlling your acne, and in many cases can actually intensify your acne and cause it to get worse. In some cases, these 'instant cure remedies' can end up causing permanent scarring.

Rather than finding solutions and treatments to alleviate the symptoms, problems are often compounded. Ill-advised treatments based off these myths can have less than effective results and can often do further damage in the case of severe acne.

In light of the influence that these myths can have on both understanding acne in general and the courses of treatment in particular, it would be wise to start with a quick overview of some of the more common myths that are out there, dispelling the misinformation with the truth about them.

Myth #1: Acne Is Caused By Poor Hygiene

It doesn't matter how often, how ritually, you scrub your face and other areas affected

by acne; this has no bearing on either the status of current a breakout or the creation of new problems. In fact, this sort of rigorous regimen of washing and scrubbing can actually irritate skin and make the acne worse, not better.

Though you may have heard so from well-meaning parents growing up or some other misinformed person, acne is not caused by poor hygiene.

This doesn't mean that hygiene isn't important. In fact, good hygiene can help reduce the effects of acne if used in conjunction with acne treatment products.

Rather than frequent, harsh washing, it is generally recommended that you wash your face twice to three times a day with mild soap and then pat it dry - don't scrub dry.

Myth #2: Acne Is Caused By Your Diet

“Don't eat chocolate, it will give you pimples!” “They say that eating greasy foods can give you zits.”

Most of you have heard these and other similar statements before, right?

What they are saying, in effect, is that what you eat can cause acne. But, what they are saying isn't true. It is a myth, one of the more popular ones actually, about the causes of acne.

Extensive scientific research has been conducted, searching for possible correlations between one's diet and a possible cause of acne, and have not found anything conclusive.

However, each of us is different. Some people notice that breakouts are worse after

eating certain foods--and the kinds of food differ with each person.

For example, some people may notice breakouts after eating chocolate; while others have no effects with chocolate. Instead, they notice breakouts occurring after they drink too much coffee or caffeine.

These are just examples but they might be worth heading. If there is some sort of food or drink that might be affecting your acne, then cut back and see if that helps.

Myth #3: Acne Is Caused By Stress & Anxiety

Stress is not a direct cause of acne but it is true that some types of stress can cause the body to produce a hormone called *cortisol*, which can irritate existing acne. Indirectly, some medication that we take to alleviate or control extreme stress or emotional problems like depression can be factors in the production of acne.

In fact, some medicines have acne listed as a possible side effect.

Myth #4: Acne Will Disappear On Its Own

This is generally not true and acne needs treatment in order to be cleared up.

With the selection of acne treatment products available today there is no reason not to investigate and find what has the best results for those concerned. In some cases, a dermatologist should be consulted and other forms of treatment can be pursued.

Myth #5: Tanning Will Eliminate Acne

In fact, this has the reverse effect.

At first it may seem that the latest bake in the tanning bed or sunbathing has improved your complexion, but in fact the tan may only have masked or covered the acne. In reality, the sun can make the skin dry and irritated and this can lead to more breakouts.

On another note, if you do tan, make sure that you are using a sunscreen that doesn't contain oils and other chemicals that might clog up your pores and cause acne to get worse. (Look for *noncomedogenic* or *nonacnegenic* on the label.)

Myth #6: Breaking The Zit Will Clear It Up

Again, though this seems true, it is another myth.

Rather than speeding up the process of healing, this action actually prolongs the situation as popping the whitehead caused the bacteria inside to be pushed deeper into the skin, which allows more infection to grow, and ultimately leads to scarring.

Myth #7: Only Teenagers Suffer From Acne

The truth is that about 25% to 30% of *all* people between the ages 25- 44 have active acne. So the idea that acne is only a problem for teens is yet another myth.

After covering these myths, it is important to note, that these are not all of the myths that are out there, circulating in the popular health magazines and on the Internet.

No, not by a long shot.

There are dozens more where these came from.

As someone who had suffered from extreme acne since childhood, I was desperate to blow open the lid on the true causes and treatments of acne, and throughout my journey, I came across one resource that stood out above all others.

The author of this book, Mike Walden, clearly understands the dramatic impact that acne can have on our lives and takes a real aggressive approach to revealing the proven home based remedies and treatments that will not only provide instant relief but will ultimately eliminate acne for good.

The book has been in publication since 2004 and offers extensive information on some of the most comprehensive, holistic acne solutions available. They also offer prompt support should you need help getting started with these breakthrough remedies.