



GETTING SAVVY ABOUT ACNE CARE

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ACTIVITY GOAL

The goal of this activity is to help you work with and talk to your child or teen's healthcare team about a skincare routine to help manage acne.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

You will learn about:

- What acne is and what can cause it
- Skincare tips for acne
- How acne may look
- Talking to your child or teen's healthcare team, and questions you can ask

WebMD Education

Getting Savvy About Acne Care

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Getting Savvy About Acne Care

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What Can Cause Acne?

Acne can have many causes, but factors that may lead to acne can include:

- Too much sebum and build-up of dead skin cells
- Certain skin bacteria
- Hormone changes, such as during puberty
- Genetics (traits inherited from parents)
- Certain medicines

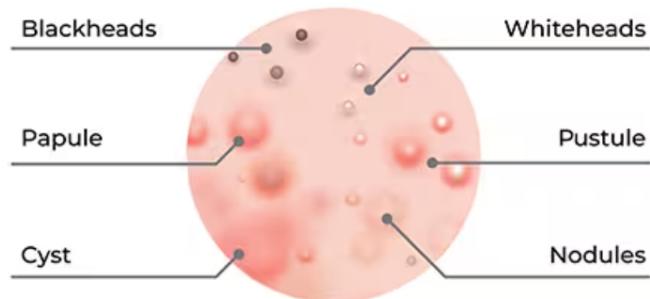
Acne is not caused by diet, stress, an allergy, skin irritants, or factors in the environment. But all of these may make acne worse.



How Acne May Look

When follicles get clogged, they can form bumps called comedones. But acne can vary for different people and cause different types of lesions, including:

- Whiteheads: comedones under the skin with closed pores that look like a white bump
- Blackheads: comedones that reach the skin's surface and have open pores that look black due to air discoloring the sebum
- Papules: inflamed comedones that form small, tender, red or pink bumps
- Pustules ("pimples"): papules with white or yellow pus at the tip
- Nodules: lumps under the skin that are hard, swollen, and painful
- Cysts: pus-filled lumps under the skin that can be painful





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Skincare Tips for Acne

Whether acne is mild or severe, having a good skincare routine is key. Talk to your child or teen's healthcare team about what they recommend for their type of acne and lesions.

Skincare tips can include:

- Wash gently with mild cleanser and lukewarm water in the morning and before bed, as well as after exercise or sweating
- Don't rub or scrub skin and avoid touching lesions, squeezing, or picking
- Shave carefully and gently in the direction of hair growth and using shaving cream
- Don't sleep in makeup, or share makeup or brushes
- Protect skin from the sun with clothing, hats, umbrellas, and sunscreen
- Use gentle, oil-free, noncomedogenic (doesn't clog pores) products. Avoid products and ingredients that can irritate skin or cause an allergic reaction, such as rubbing alcohol, fragrances, dyes, and preservatives



Moisturizing Is an Important Part of Acne Skincare

It may be tempting to dry out skin to get rid of oil. But drying out skin too much can weaken its protective barrier and cause damage. So moisturizing, especially after washing, is an important part of acne skincare.

Moisturizers work to soothe skin and reduce the irritation, inflammation, and damage that can happen with dryness. They may also lower sebum production by creating a film on top of the skin.

Some moisturizers may also contain emollients that help protect the outer layer of the skin barrier and ingredients such as ceramides (the lipids found in skin) or humectants that help keep water in the skin.





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OTC Acne Treatment

Acne can range from mild to severe and may even change over time.

For mild acne, your child or teen's healthcare team may recommend medicine you can get without a prescription (over-the-counter or OTC). This is often a cream or gel applied topically to the skin that may contain ingredients such as benzoyl peroxide, resorcinol, retinoids, salicylic acid, or sulfur. There are several available, so be sure to ask which products and ingredients to use or avoid.

Acne can be stubborn, and it may take as long as 8 weeks to see a difference. It can take time for skin to adjust, so it's important to stick to a skincare routine and be patient.



Questions to Ask Your Child or Teen's Healthcare Team

Questions you can ask about acne and skincare can include:

- How can acne look?
- What skincare routine do you recommend?
- Which products and ingredients do you recommend we use or avoid?
- What else can we do to help take care of my child or teen's skin?
- What should we do if my child or teen starts to feel stressed or depressed?



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