

ACNE MANAGEMENT

Acne is a common skin condition that affects most people at some point. It usually starts during puberty but can develop for the first time in people over 20 years old and beyond (3% of adults have acne over the age of 35). Occasionally it can affect young children.

Acne most commonly occurs on the face, back and chest, ranging from a few spots to a more severe problem causing scarring and/or hyperpigmentation.

Acne causes oily skin, blackheads and whiteheads (comedones), pus-filled spots (pustules), red bumps (papules), larger deeper bumps (nodules) and discolouration that can be red or hyperpigmented (darker than your normal skin colour). Severe acne can also cause scars, which can be firm and raised (hypertrophic or keloid) or indented (pitted or atrophic).

Contributing factors to acne include – family history (parents or siblings who had experienced acne themselves), hormones (menstrual periods, pregnancy, some contraceptives), Polycystic ovarian syndrome, certain medications, diet, cosmetic products containing oil and smoking.

We have produced this leaflet to make you aware of options available for the management of acne. Treatment options are catered to the severity of your symptoms. Positive effects can take 6-8 weeks to become noticeable.

Listed below are some acne management methods; and their pros and cons.

<u>Mild-moderate acne</u>		
<u>Treatment option</u>	<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<p>Simple methods: Washing with mild soaps/cleansers no more than twice a day</p> <p>Avoiding oil based skin products and removing all makeup before bed</p> <p>Avoiding abrasive face washes such as scrubs</p> <p>Eating food with lower glycaemic index (fruit/veg, brown bread/rice and pasta)</p> <p>Avoid picking or scratching of the spots.</p> <p>Stopping smoking</p>	<p>- Do not have to use topical treatment or take oral medication</p>	<p>- May not be enough to resolve acne alone</p>
<p>Topical treatments Adapalene/benzoyl peroxide/clindamycin/azelaic acid</p> <p>12 week course to be applied once daily in the evening</p>	<p>- Help unblock clogged pores</p> <p>- Can be very affective avoiding the requirement for oral medication</p> <p>- Benzoyl peroxide can be bought over the counter.</p>	<p>- Can cause skin dryness and irritation</p> <p>- Use may have to be increased over time to reduce chance of any initial skin irritation</p> <p>- Benzoyl peroxide can bleach pillows and clothing <u>but not skin</u></p> <p>- Can cause photosensitivity</p> <p>- Certain topical applications not for use in pregnancy or breastfeeding</p>

<p>Oral antibiotics (in conjunction with topical treatment) Lymecycline/Doxycycline</p> <p>Taken for period of 3 months (evidence suggests there is little benefit for using antibiotics for more than 3 months but if relapsing quickly can be more suited to 6 month courses)</p>	<p>- Can be effective in treatment acne in areas difficult to reach with topical options and unresponsive to topical treatments alone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antimicrobial resistance - Photosensitivity - Systemic side effects (diarrhoea, vomiting, rashes, upset stomach) - Not for use in pregnancy or breastfeeding - Not for use for children under 12 years
<p>Contraceptive pill (in conjunction with topical treatment) Combined oral contraceptive with lower oestrogen content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alternative to oral antibiotics in women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It can cause hypertension. - It can cause headache. - Not suitable for people with migraine - It can cause mood changes. - Carry a small risk of blood clots, this risk increases with smokers and overweight
FOR MODERATE TO SEVERE ACNE UNRESPONSIVE TO TREATMENT		
Treatment		
<p>Dermatology referral – ? month waiting list at present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unresponsive mild- moderate acne following 2 failed courses of oral antibiotics - Severe acne unresponsive to previous treatment 		