

A STORY OF HOW A BEAUTY THERAPIST MADE PEACE WITH  
HER ACNE. READ HER JOURNEY, GET HER TIPS

# THE ART OF ACNE

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So who is this person who thinks she knows the answer to the mystifying, mind boggling, confidence crushing thing that is Acne. My name is Vivian Yasmine I am a qualified Beauty therapist with about 15 years' experience (excluding the self-taught stuff before I actually studied lol), but more importantly I was/am an acne sufferer.

Before I delve head first into my story let me clarify that I definitely haven't found the answer because no matter what anyone tells you there is no 'one true answer' when it comes to Acne. I don't claim to know it all cause let's face it the skin is a very complex organ, throw in genetics, hormones, external, internal factors, lifestyle and whatever else you can find and you've got yourself a web of possibilities and hurdles to climb and way too much to understand that are forever changing. So no there is no way anyone could know it all when it comes to acne but we can definitely get our heads around the important stuff which will help us get closer to where we want to be...clearer, smoother, healthier skin, step by step, bit by bit. That's the thing with skin especially acne, don't expect this race to be a quick and easy straight forward sprint it's more

like a very long marathon with obstacles, dips and turns along the way. But as the saying goes, steady wins the race.

Let's see my love/hate relationship with Acne began not during the time when most teenagers start to develop the dreaded spot. In fact during this time I was one of those people 'we acne sufferers' envied. My skin was porcelain smooth and even when I did get the odd spot due to that time of the month it would be so small you could barely see it and it would be gone in a day or two. Call it a jinx, call it plain unlucky, call it what you may but fast forward to when I was 19 my skin suddenly changed.

I remember waking up one morning and my upper left cheek just under my cheekbone was really sore. I thought I must have slept on it wrong or bumped it without realising cause it felt really bruised almost like I'd been punched. A few days went by and it got worse I began to feel a lump under my skin that was pretty big. Finally, when the lump became visible and the soreness just got worse, I went to the doctor I needed to find out what this thing was that seemed to be growing in my face!

Simply put the doctor told me that I had developed a large cyst under the skin. We were both baffled as to why cause I'd never suffered from oily skin let alone any type of acne, but it was what it was I was given antibiotics and was sent on my way. It took a while but finally the antibiotics started to work....day by day the cyst got smaller and smaller and bit by bit the pain went away until finally it was gone. Great right?! WRONG. Within a month or two of stopping the antibiotics my skin once again changed. This time it wasn't a cyst my once porcelain, smooth, normal skin started to get oily. At first it was just a bit on the T-zone then before I knew it my whole face became and oil sleek. Once again I was left baffled. I didn't wear make up or use skin products and hadn't done anything different so I had no idea what was going on. From there it all just went downhill.

I went from the odd spot during my period to multiple spots, whiteheads and blackheads. My pores became so large and visible until eventually I began to experience the dreaded painful red/purple nodule and cystic type acne that left me in tears. Within 1 to 1.5years my skin had completely changed. People who knew me couldn't help but say " what happened

to your skin” like I needed them to point it out but I guess it was such a massive change that they couldn’t help it. At this point I had tried it all. Every over the counter medication and skin product. I’d tried DIY home remedies. I’d gone back to the doctor numerous times who would give me more antibiotics and prescription creams that only worked short term. As soon as I stopped taking them it would all come back but what felt like 100 times worse. I couldn’t be on antibiotics for the rest of my life!

During this time, it wasn’t just my physical appearance that had changed but emotionally and mentally I became a different person. I was once this confident social butterfly who did a 360 on evolution and ended up a caterpillar in a cocoon not wanting to face the world. Every morning I’d wake up dreading the mirror cause I knew more than likely there would be yet another spot or two.

Before I continue, I have to take this moment to say that your physical appearance or what the world thinks you should or shouldn’t look like should never impact your self-confidence and self-worth. It should never be a reason for bullying and for you to feel like you don’t have a voice. Always reach out there

are more people willing to help than not. Below are the links to some great helplines should you or someone you know need them. <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>  
<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/all-about-depression>

After deciding that antibiotics were not the solution, I sort the help of a Dermatologist (skin specialist) She did some blood tests and found that I had a higher than usual level of androgens particularly testosterone. I was like “ok so what does that mean?” She said it’s causing your skin to produce a lot of oil which is causing your breakouts. I was like great finally a break through, right? WRONG!. Instead of looking further into it she put me on Accutane which is like Roaccutane, not a very nice drug with a lot of side effects but at that point I just wanted my acne gone!

Hold on a sec another moment for a pit stop guys. While doctors and specialists are very helpful and important, I urge everyone who considers prescription medication to take the time to fully understand what they are and what it could be doing to your body. Discuss all the pros and cons with your doctor and parents and then make the right decision for you.

So anyway, thinking that Accutane was my only option I decided to take it. I was on it for about 6 months before I decided I wasn't going to keep taking it. While my skin did clear up it was very dry and flaky and the other side effects were just not worth it. So I was back to what felt like square one. My days and nights were filled with research, trying to learn and understand what was going on with my skin but more importantly my body. This was when my journey began as a beauty therapist.

It was then that I went back to where the root cause of my acne lay, my blood test that showed high levels of testosterone. After seeking another opinion from a GP it was finally discovered that I had Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome. I won't go into detail about that as it's a complicated hormonal condition that would require an ebook of its own, but the main thing was I finally had a reason as to why my skin was the way that it was. Unfortunately, I came to learn that PCOS did not have a 'cure' so to speak and at that point the GP led me to believe my only option was to go on the pill to try balance my hormones and so I did.

For almost 2 years I was on the pill which along with clinic treatments and the correct skincare products did clear my skin. My skin was finally clearer than it had been in a very long time. But yes there is a But.....yet again I was experiencing terrible side effects from the pill and once again realised it wasn't a long term solution and as soon as I stopped the pill my acne was back thankfully I was able to keep it from getting too bad with the knowledge and experience I had gained as a beauty therapist but still it was there. So once again I found myself on the hunt for another option. This time my journey lead me to a naturopath who specialised in hormonal imbalance and this is where the real turning point was for me. With the use of natural products and changing my diet we were able to help balance my hormones by teaching my body to do what it was meant to do. It didn't happen overnight and took dedication but for me and my situation it was definitely worth it. Fast forward to today almost 13 years later I'm still prone to breakouts particularly when my condition flares up but they are small and only a few here and there. I'm able to better take care of my skin and body because I have an understanding of what's going on and what triggers it and

what makes it better. Through the years I have been lucky to help many clients begin to understand their skin and body better and have watched them walk in to my clinic as the caterpillar trying to hide in its cocoon to with time walking out as the butterfly they deserve to be, and that's definitely why I love what I do.

For most teenager's acne is just a phase of life that they will grow out of so there is a light at the end of the tunnel but while it's happening, they can do something about it. And for others like myself acne may be an ongoing battle but it is one you can learn to conquer.

Disclaimer: My story is not intended to endorse any medications or therapies it is merely my experience with acne and my chosen methods at the time. Individuals should speak a professional regarding their skin concerns

# ACNE

Acne is one of the most common skin complaints during adolescence and at other times of hormonal change so you are definitely not alone. In recent years we have seen an increasing number of people developing acne later in life this is thought to be due to the increased use of synthetic chemicals and hormones in the farming and agriculture industry. As the saying goes you are what you eat. Acne can present in a number of different forms and is graded on its degree of severity.

Acne is thought to result from the interplay of external, internal and genetic factors eg.

- \*Hormones such as progesterones, oestrogens and testosterone
- \*Hormones such as insulin
- \*Chemical substances produced by the body during stressful periods and/or illness
- \*Smoking, alcohol poor lifestyle choices
- \*Genetics increase your chances of developing acne. Genes modify the physiology of your skin to be more sensitive to

hormones, inflammatory response to bacteria and the production of anti-inflammatory chemicals in the skin.

Hormonal acne may be caused by influxes of hormones from:

- Menstruation
- puberty
- polycystic ovarian syndrome
- menopause
- increased androgen levels

More specifically, these hormone fluctuations may aggravate acne issues by increasing:

- overall skin inflammation
- oil (sebum) production in the pores
- clogged skin cells in hair follicles
- production of acne-causing bacteria called *Propionibacterium acnes*

# Puberty and acne

When a person goes through puberty, the brain releases a hormone known as gonadotropin-releasing hormone. The hormone then travels to the pituitary gland which signals it to release two additional hormones that affect a female or males body differently. This results in growth and development, production of hair under the arms and pubic area, and of course acne.

Acne comes in several different shapes and sizes and can range from mild to moderate to severe. Pimples are the red bumps that occur when the wall of the hair follicle breaks and swells, containing the excess oil and sebum. Whiteheads are the stage before pimples when oil and dead skin cells plug the hair follicle, but it does not erupt. The top of a whitehead appears like a white pin dot, while a blackhead resembles a black pin dot and contains oil as well. The most severe forms of acne are nodules and cysts, which occur when the hair follicle wall breaks deep down in the skin. More about the different types of acne below.

# WHAT CAUSES ACNE?

Those with acne have a condition called retention hyperkeratosis, this is when an acne affected follicle is producing dead skin cells 4-5times faster than a normal follicle. In addition the skin contains natural “enzymes” that control the thickness of the stratum corneum layer (dead skin cell layer), research has shown that acne sufferers have fewer enzymes resulting in a build up of these dead cells which ultimately clog the pore. This combined with higher levels of the hormone dihydrotestosterone results in a thicker stickier sebum (oil) meaning the dead skin cells are now ‘glued’ down and further clog follicles the result is a comedone. The normal bacteria in the follicle then starts to multiply and feeds on the thick oil and dead skin cells causing inflammation, swelling and possible infection the result acne.

# Acne Triggers

Below is a list of common things that could be causing your acne or making it worse.

- D&C red dyes used in make up particularly eye shadows, blush and lipstick.
- Self-tanning ingredients
- Bronzing powders
- Heavy silicone based moisturisers and make up
- Certain chemical sunscreens
- Make up primers
- Tinted moisturisers
- Alkaline products
- UV radiation (long periods of sun exposure)
- Chlorine
- Increase in Testosterone levels
- Smoking
- Gluten
- Dairy

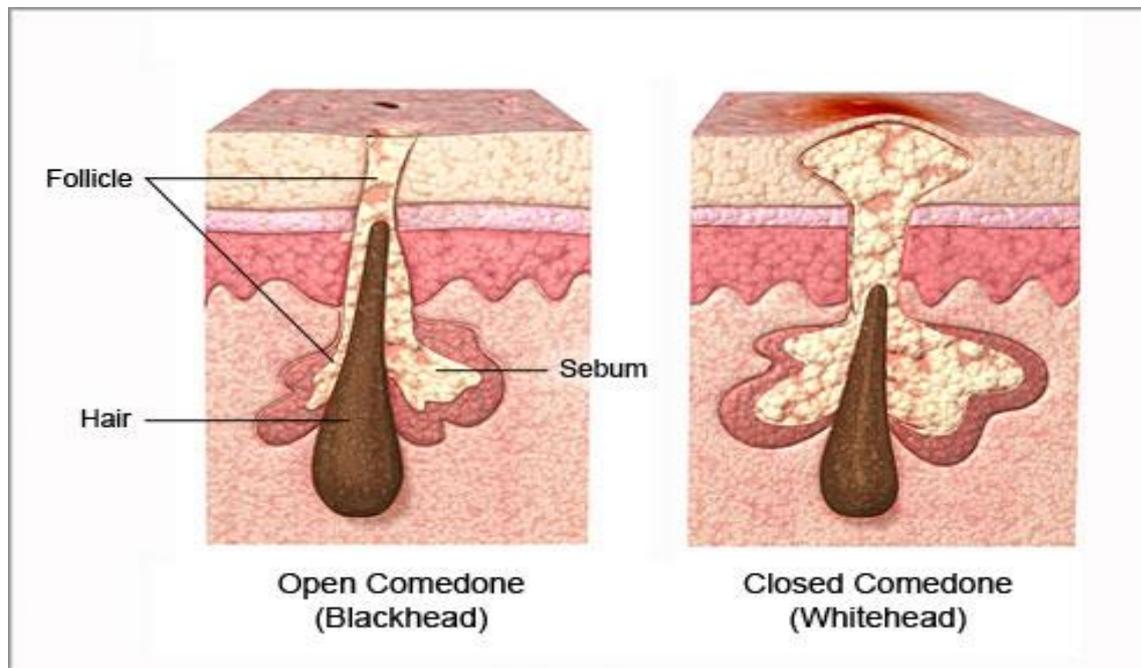
# Types of acne

## Acne Vulgaris



Acne vulgaris is the medical name for common acne. It is when there are multiple types of acne present on the skin. From blackheads and whiteheads to pustules and papules as well as other types of acne. The most common spots for breakouts are the face, chest, shoulders, and back and acne vulgaris can range from mild to severe. Although mild acne may improve with proper skincare, in clinic/salon treatments and over-the-counter products, more severe forms should be treated by a dermatologist.

## Comedones



A comedo/comedones is the name used when a hair follicle has become clogged with oil, dead skin cells and pore clogging skincare products. Comedones can develop into bumps called whiteheads and blackheads. Products that may trigger comedones are called comedogenic and contain ingredients that are likely to clog your pores such as lanolin, cocoa butter, lauric acid etc . Products labelled as noncomedogenic are less likely to clog pores and contribute to acne. When looking at the ingredients list of a product a good rule of thumb is to check if any comedogenic ingredients are within the first seven ingredients on the ingredient list if so you may want to reconsider using the product. If, however, any of these

ingredients are far down on the list, this means the manufacturer may have included it in a very small amount and the product may still be safe to use. A list of how comedogenic common ingredients are can be found here <https://www.dermatocare.com/blog/comprehensive-list-of-non-comedogenic-and-comedogenic-ingredients>

## Blackheads



Blackheads are comedones that are open at the surface of the skin. They are filled with excess oil and dead skin cells.

Contrary to popular belief It is actually not dirt that causes the comedone to turn black. The black hue results from the irregular reflection of light coming from clogged hair follicles

as well as the oil oxidising. Blackheads can usually be treated with a proper home care skin routine using correct skincare products as well as regular in clinic/salon treatments. These products and treatments focus on unclogging the pores, removing the blackheads as well as preventing a reassurance.

## Whiteheads



Comedones that stay closed at the surface of the skin are called whiteheads. This happens when oil and skin cells prevent a clogged hair follicle from opening and a whitehead forms. The same treatment plan as that to treat blackheads are also effective against whiteheads. It is important to not squeeze whiteheads as this may result in scarring.

## Papules



Papules are comedones that become inflamed, forming small red, pink, brown or purple bump/s on the skin varying in size from a pinhead to 1cm and can cluster into a papular rash. Picking or squeezing can make the inflammation worse and may lead to scarring. A large number of papules may indicate moderate to severe acne. Papules may open when scratched and become infected and crusty. Papules should not to be confused with acne pustules or cysts. Pustules contain pus and are often painful, while papules are generally painless unless scratched or picked open, and do not contain pus. Papules may go away on their own without treatment though treatment with inclinic chemical peels will quicken the process, whereas pustules can progress into more serious, deeper lesions called cysts, which often lead to scarring.

## Pustules



Pustules are another kind of inflamed pimple. They resemble a whitehead with a red ring around the bump. The bump is typically filled with white or yellow pus. They form when the area becomes infected and your body is trying to fight it off with white blood cells. The pus itself is a result of a mixture of infected fluid and dead white blood cells. When pus builds up under your skin or in a pore, it then causes a pustule. Avoid picking or squeezing pustules as they can cause scars or dark spots to develop on the skin as well as lead to worse forms of acne such as cysts and nodules. Using the correct skincare products and utilising a clinic/salon can help reduce inflammation, clear and prevent further breakouts as well as prevent scarring.

## Nodules



Nodules are large, inflamed bumps that feel firm to the touch. They develop deep within the skin, are often quite painful and are usually a more severe form of acne. Nodular acne can appear on the face, back, and the body. Unlike comedones and pustules that heal relatively quickly, acne nodules can last a long time, sometimes months. These nodules feel like hard knots under the skin. Sometimes they develop a white head, but usually they stay stubbornly deep down under the skin's surface. You may get just a few nodular breakouts, or they can be more widespread. While a good skin care routine and in clinic/salon treatments can help to calm nodular acne down and help to prevent scarring it is best combined with treatment by a dermatologist as prescription medication may be required.

## Cysts



Cysts are large, pus-filled lesions that look similar to boils. Like nodules, cysts can be painful and should be treated by a dermatologist alongside correct skincare products and in-clinic treatments. People who develop nodules and cysts are usually considered to have a more severe form of acne. Cystic acne happens when the infection goes deep into your skin, creating a red, tender bump that's full of pus. It may hurt or itch. If a cyst bursts, the infection can spread, causing more breakouts.

## Acne Mechanica



Acne mechanica is caused by heat, friction, and pressure against the skin, often the result of wearing sports gear such as a helmet or baseball cap. It is sometimes called "sports-induced acne" because it occurs frequently in athletes. Preventive measures include wearing absorbent breathable material under sports equipment and showering immediately after activity.

## Acne Conglobata



Acne conglobata is one of the most severe forms of acne. It involves many inflamed nodules that are connected under the skin to other nodules. It usually affects the neck, chest, arms, and buttocks. It often leaves scars. This type of acne is more common in males. Treatment by a dermatologist is essential.

# IS YOUR ACNE MILD OR SEVERE?

## Mild Acne



Acne falls into the mild category if you have fewer than 20 whiteheads or blackheads, fewer than 15 inflamed bumps, or fewer than 30 total lesions. Mild acne is usually treated by proper skin care products and in clinic/salon treatments. It may take 8 – 12 weeks to see a significant improvement.

## Moderate Acne



If you have 20 to 100 whiteheads or blackheads, 15 to 50 inflamed bumps, or 30 to 125 total lesions, your acne is considered moderate. Whilst moderate acne can be drastically improved with proper skincare products and in clinic/salon treatments sometimes a Dermatologist may also recommend prescription medication. It may take several weeks to a few months to notice an improvement, and your acne may appear to get worse before it gets better so stick it out.

## Severe Nodulocystic Acne



People with severe nodulocystic acne have multiple inflamed cysts and nodules. The acne may turn deep red or purple. It often leaves scars in the form of hyperpigmentation and ice pick scars. Prompt treatment by a dermatologist is recommended especially to minimize scarring.

# COMMON MISTAKES WHEN TREATING ACNE

When we have oily skin and acne it is hard to resist the temptation to try and make your skin squeaky clean. Or to not purchase every oil absorbing product on the market and using them all at once.

However the truth is that using cleansers and products that strip your skin of too much oil can make it much worse. Not only are they drying and dehydrating to your skin which can further clog pores and compromise protective barrier increasing bacterial invasion, but they only trigger your skin to produce even more oil to replace the oil lost. It's a vicious cycle.

Generally speaking cleansing is the step where most of the oil stripping can take place.

The popular belief with acne cleansers is that they need to remove every spec of oil from the skin leaving it dry and tight, when in actual fact a good cleanser helps to eliminate dirt, make-up and excess oil while leaving your skin PH balanced, soft and comfortable.

## How can you make sure you're not stripping your skin?

It's all about the ingredients! Picking a gentle, mild cleanser that is right for your skin can seem like a challenge, but it doesn't have to be! The best place to start is by making sure the product passes the ingredient test.

## The ingredient test.....

Firstly if you're not using a chirally correct cosmeceutical product (this means they use active ingredients but correct it by taking the parts that cause reactions out and leave all the great corrective stuff in) or a natural non toxic cleanser, its very likely that you're stripping your skin because the majority of other cleansers are generally made with harsh skin stripping detergents. Having said that even if you're using a cleanser that claims to be a chirally correct cosmecutical or natural it doesn't always mean it's a 100% or that it's mild. The best way to know if a cleanser won't strip your skin is by looking at the ingredients particularly the first 7 as they are the ingredients mostly used. So go grab your cleanser and check the ingredient list against the below list of ingredients to avoid.

## Benzoyl Peroxide

will show up on ingredient lists as one of the following:

dibenzoyl peroxide, peroxide, dibenzoyl, acnegel, aztec bpo, benzoperoxide, benzoyl peroxide (acgih:osha), benzoylperoxyde, bzf-60, cadat bpo

## Sulfur

will show up on ingredient lists as "sulfur" or as "sulfur" in combination with other words such as: colloidal sulfur, flowers of sulfur, etc

## Sulfates

will show up on ingredient lists as one of the following:

sodium laureth sulfate (SLES), sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS), ammonium laureth sulfate (SLES), ammonium lauryl sulfate (ALS), tea lauryeth sulfate (TEA), sodium myreth sulphate, cocamidopropyl betaine

Also check all ingredients that include “sodium” in their listings – this is where some natural cleansers can go wrong by picking an ingredient they think is natural when it’s not (or it was once a natural ingredient but was then mixed with chemicals or hormone disrupting preservatives). – Also see the note below...

- **note:** if “*sodium hydroxide*” is listed, this ingredient refers to lye. Lye is what turns oils (and butters if they are in the recipe) into soap. So many natural cleansers will use lye unless it’s a soap free formula. Using lye is only an issue if the manufacturer hasn’t allowed enough time to cure or to turn the other ingredients into soap. Once this process is complete, no lye is left in the final product (it is completely consumed during the process) and therefore will not strip the skin
- *Polyethylene Glycol and other drying glycols*
  - will show up on ingredient lists as one of the following:
    - polyethylene glycol, PEG, PEG-(plus a number) such as PEG-7, polyethylene (alone or in combination with another word or

number), polyoxyethylene, butylene glycol, 1,3-butanediol, 1,3-butylene glycol, 1,3-dihydroxybutane, 3-hydroxy-1-butanol

- *Isopropyl Alcohol and other drying alcohols*
  - will show up on the ingredient list as one of the following:
    - isopropyl alcohol, 1-methylethanol, 1-methylethyl alcohol, 2-hydroxypropane, 2-hydroxypropane alcohol, 2-propanol, isopropanol, propan-2-ol, sec-propyl alcohol, sd alcohol 40, sd-40, ethyl alcohol, alcohol, absolute ethanol, distilled spirits, ethanol, undenatured (or as: undenatured ethanol), ethyl hydroxide, alcohol dehydrated, alcohol, anhydrous, benzyl alcohol, a-toluenol, benzenemthanol, benzylic alcohol, phenylcarbinol, phenymethanol, pheny methyl alcohol, alpha-hydroxytoluene, alpha-toluenol, benzal alcohol, benenemthanol, diethanolamine (DEA)

If your cleanser doesn't contain any of the ingredients above but has a bunch of ingredients that you have no idea about, just google them and add acne or skin, this will give you a general understanding of what it is doing to your skin and acne.

**Note:** The above list is only of the most common skin stripping ingredients. There are definitely more but not as commonly used.

## Excessive Scrubbing of the Skin

Exfoliating is another important step that can sometime be overdone. It's tempting to try to scrub away every fleck of makeup, every speck of oil and to feel as though you're scrubbing away your breakouts and blackheads, but excessive scrubbing can actually damage your skin, triggering more breakouts. Additionally, if you use harsh products more often than recommended, you may irritate your skin, triggering allergic reactions that increase oil production and acne. Stick to once or twice a week.

## Picking or Touching Your Skin

We have all woken up in the morning to find a juicy pimple tempting us to pick at it and to squeeze that blackhead that's calling your name. Yet the momentary satisfaction of popping a pimple typically gives way to further breakouts. Picking at acne irritates your skin, introducing more bacteria and slows down healing which may lead to scarring. It is best to leave acne alone and to minimise touching your face as much as possible. Let the correct products and treatments do their job.

# COULD YOUR ACNE BE ROSACEA?



Rosacea is a difficult condition to diagnose as many skin concerns may look similar to rosacea such as acne particularly adult acne, irritant contact dermatitis, seborrheic dermatitis, lupus, iatrogenic rosacea (topical steroid induced) and vitamin B3 and vitamin C deficiencies. Careful analysis of the skin, diet and lifestyle is essential to determine the exact causes and treatment for red or inflamed skin.

Rosacea is chronic redness that is characterized by small red bumps that typically develop across the cheeks and nose but may also appear on the chin, forehead and neck. Rosacea usually begins with intermittent flushing and vasodilation of the blood vessels across the nose and cheeks. The flushing becomes more frequent over time until the skin becomes permanently red and irritated. Links between rosacea and poor digestion, vitamin B deficiencies, hormonal

imbalances and the overgrowth of the skin mite *Demodex folliculorum* have been found.

Studies show that people with rosacea often have low stomach acid, low pancreatic enzymes and/or the presence of *Helicobacter pylori* in the stomach. This can lead to poor digestion and absorption of nutrients as well as the over growth of unfriendly micro-organisms in the gut.

Avoid acidic foods such as red meat, garlic, onions spicy foods as well as alcohol and coffee.

Eat foods that are cooling such as apples, bananas, pears, melon, lettuce, cucumber celery and natural yogurt. Vitamin B deficiency may be linked to diffuse redness. Foods rich in vitamin B include whole grains, egg yolks, broccoli, nuts, green leafy vegetables, avocados and spirulina.

Vitamin C deficiency can lead to dilated and weakened capillaries across the nose and cheeks. Cigarette smoking, alcohol, coffee and a poor diet will aggravate the condition further.

Vitamin C, vitamin A and bioflavonoids will assist the strength and support of fragile capillary walls.

# How to help improve acne

- Exfoliate with the right product and in clinic treatments such as microdermabrasion to reduce retention hyperkeratosis (avoid over exfoliating as this could make your acne worse)
- Reduce P.acnes bacteria with non stripping antibacterial agents, changing pillowcase frequently, wipe down phone every night and with in clinic treatments such as BLUE LIGHT LED THERAPY
- Reduce inflammation and oil flow with Zinc which is highly effective in the treatment of acne and oily skin. It has the ability to reduce inflammation and infection. Foods high in zinc include oysters, pumpkin seeds, B complex vitamins.
- Reduce and control stress levels. The hormone cortisol is released when we are under stress. Chronic stress results in constantly high cortisol levels and increases testosterone production as well as insulin.
- Omega 3 essential fatty acids help regulate hormones

- Eat a low glycemic diet. Chromium, magnesium, calcium, zinc, alpha lipoic acid will assist with blood sugar control.
- Alpha lipoic acid helps reduce the conversion of testosterone to DHT (dihydrotestosterone) by converting it back to its less potent form. Improve liver detoxification and the breakdown of testosterone.

## Retinoids

If your hormonal acne is mild, you may be able to use topical retinoids. Retinoids are derived from vitamin A. Retinoids work by normalizing skin cell function and growth. They also stimulate increased cell turnover and remove the excess debris that clog pores. Its commonly referred as the 'detoxing' phase of skin rejuvenation so sometimes your skin may get worse before it gets much better. In addition to treating and reducing acne, retinoids also help to even out skin tone, shrink enlarged pores, decrease redness, improve hyperpigmentation and increase healthy skin cell turnover

Many retinoid creams, gels, and lotions are available over the counter. But it is recommended you book in for a skin consultation with a certified beauty therapist who can advise you of the best retinoid for your skin as well as explain how to best use it for optimal results. For more severe acne you may want to see your doctor about a prescription-strength formulation. If you add a topical retinoid to your regimen, it's important to apply sunscreen daily. Retinoids can increase your risk of sunburn.

## AHAs and BHA

There are two primary topical ways to exfoliate skin, either with alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs), or with beta hydroxy acid (BHA). There is only one BHA (beta hydroxy acid) and that is salicylic acid, but there are a variety of AHAs. The five major types of AHAs that show up in skin-care products are glycolic, lactic, malic, citric, and tartaric acids. Of these, the most commonly used and most effective AHAs are glycolic and lactic acids. Both of these have the ability to penetrate the skin for effective skin exfoliation.

What glycolic, lactic, and salicylic acids both do is "unglue" the outer layer of dead skin cells, allowing healthier cells to come to the surface. Removing this dead layer can improve skin texture and color, unclog pores, and allow moisturizers and corrective skincare products to be better absorbed by the skin making them more effective. Both AHAs and BHA affect the top layers of skin, and they help to improve the appearance of acne and acne scarring.

AHAs and BHA are different to 'scrub' exfoliants as they work through chemical processes. This means they can penetrate the skin and produce better results than cosmetic scrubs, which work only on the very outer exposed surface of the skin.

The primary difference between AHAs and BHA is that AHAs are water-soluble, while BHA is lipid-(oil) soluble. This unique property of BHA allows it to penetrate the oil in the pores and exfoliate accumulated skin cells inside the oil gland that can clog pores. BHA is best used where blackheads, blemishes and acne are the issue, and AHAs are best for addressing hyperpigmentation scarring caused by acne as well as freckles, pigmentation and sun-damaged skin.

## Ingredients that help to control and balance oil flow

**Kaolin** is a naturally occurring white clay that helps absorb oil and helps to mattify the skin.

**Bentonite** is highly absorbent helping to balance excess sebum skin, and its astringent properties work to shrink and tighten irritated and enlarged pores. When mixed with water or apple cider vinegar it develops a mild electrical charge that helps it to draw toxins, heavy metals and other impurities helping to balance oil flow, unclog pores and reduce inflammation. These absorbed particles are then bound by the electrical charge, preventing them from being re-absorbed into the skin.

**Zinc** is essential for good skin health and skin optimal skin repair. In fact having a zinc deficiency can sometimes be the cause of acne or at least making it much worse particularly when it comes to acne scarring. Think of zinc as a lollypop ladies STOP sign to sebum (the oily stuff on your skin), because acne skin types make lots of sebum, using Zinc in

skincare and eating foods high in zinc can get sebum production back to normal helping to prevent clogged pores.

## Natural ingredients that may help acne

In some cases, plant-based treatment options may be used to clear up mild hormonal acne.

### Tea tree oil

Tea tree oil works by decreasing inflammation that can contribute to acne. Many skin care products contain tea tree oil however you can also use tea tree essential oil as a spot treatment. When using essential oils you should always dilute it with a carrier oil before use. Popular carrier oils include grapeseed, coconut, jojoba, and olive. The general rule is to add about 12 drops of carrier oil to every one to two drops of essential oil.

It's also important to do a skin patch test before using diluted tea tree essential oil. To do this, apply the diluted oil to the inside of your forearm. If you don't experience any irritation or inflammation within 24 hours, it should be safe to apply elsewhere.

### Green tea

Green tea is known for decreasing inflammation in the body. In addition to implementing a good skincare regimen consider drinking a few cups of green tea per day. When looking for skincare products with green tea look for at least 2% green tea extract or more as any less would not be beneficial.

## Manuka honey

Manuka honey can help to balance your skin's pH level helping to speed up the healing of acne and helps slough away dead cells that clog pores. It is an anti-inflammatory helping to decrease local inflammation caused by acne.

Whats more manuka honey is a powerful antibacterial helping to minimise bacteria that infect pores and cause acne. This honey can heal existing pimples, as well as prevent new breakouts. It can be used as...

- A cleanser on its own or add a few drops of water, massage gentle for a few minutes then wash off with luke warm water and pat dry
- A mask by mixing ground oats, manuka honey and lemon into a paste, apply evenly all over the face and leave on for 15 minutes then rinse with luke warm water and pat dry. You can apply the honey on its own and leave for 30min.
- As a spot treatment apply a tiny amount of manuka honey on the forming people and leave over night, rinse in the morning with luke warm water.

## Apple Cider Vinegar

What makes apple cider vinegar so powerful is that it contains acetic acid which has both antibacterial and antimicrobial properties. What this means is that it is going to be beneficial for killing acne-causing bacteria. Apple cider vinegar is also used by some people as a natural astringent, helping to restore the skin to a proper pH balance. Best used in a mask either with Bentonite clay or manuka honey, or as a toner by mixing 50% water and 50% apple cider vinegar, apply to a cotton pad and then to face. Allow to dry and follow with usual skincare products.

# Diet and Lifestyle

You may consider limiting the following:

- sugar
- dairy products
- Gluten products
- refined carbs, such as white bread and pasta
- red meats
- smoking
- alcohol
- pollutants
- stress

and increase the following

- exercise
- drink 8-10 glasses of water daily

Always speak to your doctor prior to making any lifestyle or diet changes.

# ACNE AND FACE MAPPING

Face mapping acne is an ancient Chinese method which helps connect the cause of acne with our internal environment. It is the belief that where breakouts are on our skin connects to a particular part of our body. Wondering how? All the organs of the face like nose, forehead, cheeks, chin indicate what's actually happening within your body. For instance, If a pimple pops up on your forehead it may be telling you that you're digestive system needs some TLC. Below is a breakdown of what your Acne could be trying to tell you about your body.

## Forehead

Breakouts on your upper forehead could be linked to..

- Your digestive system being unhappy
- Dandruff or a dry scalp that is clogging nearby pores or using pore clogging hair products.
- Not drinking enough water
- Irregular sleep which could mean a 'tired liver' this could cause a build-up of toxins

- Stress or worry
- Sweat particularly if you wear hats/caps
- Poor diet especially saturated and trans fat

Breakouts on the middle part of the forehead could be a food allergy which may be causing inflammation in the digestive system. It may also indicate a sluggish digestion especially if you experience frequent bouts of constipation.

### Remedies:

1. Consume more antioxidant foods which can get rid of toxins.
2. Avoid the intake of processed or trans fat foods.
3. Shampoo your hair at least twice a week with anti dandruff shampoo.
4. Switch to hair products that won't clog pores
5. Get proper sleep 7-8hrs a night is ideal. Its best to sleep early and wake early
6. Drink at least 2-3 litres of water a day.
7. Wash hats and caps regularly and cleanse forehead adequately to remove sweat

## Eyebrows and between eyebrows

- Tired liver particularly due to alcohol consumption
- Not enough water intake
- Processed foods
- Recent viral infection such as the flu

## Remedies:

1. Avoid the food rivals like refined/processed foods, white sugars, and alcohol.
2. Drink at least 2-3 litres of water per day

## Nose

- Poor diet
- Not enough exercise
- constipation/bloating
- Gastrointestinal imbalance especially after taking antibiotics
- Indigestion
- Eating too much salt

## Remedies:

1. Unwind yourself by exercising 20 – 30min 3 times a week
2. Don't follow poor diet plans particularly those high in salt.
3. Introduce a good quality probiotic
4. Increase foods high in fibre
5. Drink 2-3 litres of water per day

## Cheeks

- Food allergies particularly gluten
- Hayfever
- Poor air quality or high pollution work/living environment
- Dirty pillowcases and phone
- Unsuitable skincare products/makeup
- Smoking
- Too much sun exposure
- Touching face too much or resting cheeks in hands

The cheek area is the most problematic area. Red, hot swollen cheeks with breakouts may be an indicator of allergies, sinus congestion, asthma, hay fever or pollution. Any of these symptoms may also mean there may be increased reactivity to active skincare products so professional product advice is paramount to avoid irritation.

- Capillaries – This could be a sign of weakened capillaries from smoking. Possible sign of low Vitamin C levels.
- Breakout on the lower cheeks may indicate gum or teeth problems such as tooth decay, gingivitis or impacted wisdom teeth.

## Remedies:

1. Always apply sunscreen while you head out in humid or moist places.
2. Try cutting out gluten for 2-4 weeks to see if your skin improves. You can also try this with dairy
3. Don't go for greasy/creamy cosmetics. Instead, go with light creams or lotions.
4. Avoid talking long hours on phone and clean your phone every night.

5. Change pillowcase 3 times a week
6. Avoid smoking excessively.
7. Visit a dentist for a checkup

## Mouth and around lip area

- Hormone Imbalance
- Ovulation/periods
- Constipation or irregular bowel habits
- High fatty foods and too much sugar
- Toothpaste could be the cause switch brands try a natural toothpaste
- Greasy lip balms/stick
- If you are prone to dry cracked lips this could be due to constipation or poor digestion, and low gut flora due to recent antibiotics.
- Cracks at the corner of the mouth could mean possible low iron or vitamin B levels.

## Remedies:

1. Eat fresh foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds.

2. Include foods high in fibre content.
3. Introduce a good quality probiotic
4. Try not to use greasy cosmetics.

## Chin and jawline

- Hormonal imbalance
- Gynaecological issues such as PCOS
- Electrolyte imbalance
- Too much greasy foods
- Sluggish metabolic processes
- Increased stress

The sides of the chin relate to the ovaries in women and testes in men. If there is recurrent breakout or excessive hair growth it may be a sign of polycystic ovaries. Monthly breakouts can signify ovulation.

The middle of the chin relates to the bowel. Blackheads, congestion or redness can indicate a current in balance whereas chronic stress in this area may result in a deeper line.

## Remedies:

1. Relax.. Relax.. yourself. Don't stress out much. Go for early morning walks, evening strolls, indulge in recreational activities.
2. Stay hydrated drink 2-3 litres of water per day
3. Eat a healthy balanced diet
4. If you are concerned about hormonal imbalance speak with your gp

It is important to remember that when it comes to acne there is no one glove fits all and there is no overnight solution or quick fix. Treating acne requires patience, dedication and determination even if it seems to be getting worse....it usually does before it gets better. In order to get the best result it is important to diagnose the type of acne you have as well as any internal, external and lifestyle factors that may be causing your acne or making it worse. You are not alone in this search while this guide has been put together to help you to better understand acne, we always recommend speaking to a professional in order to help you better analyse and assess your skin and to help put together

an at home and in clinic treatment plan. Professionals that can help are:

- Qualified beauty therapists
- Dermatologists
- GP
- Naturopath
- Dietician/Nutritionist

There is always a light at the end of the tunnel. By purchasing this ebook you have taken the first step in clearer healthier skin.

**DISCLAIMER: This app is designed to inform you and enhance your general knowledge. This is not intended to replace face to face skin consultations with your therapists or doctors. You should consult your doctor before making any lifestyle or diet changes or if you are concerned about your skin. This app does not diagnose or recognize medical skin concerns such as irregular skin moles or skin cancers. If you decide to apply any of the information in this application you are taking full responsibility for your actions. We are not responsible for any direct or indirect, punitive, special, incidental or any consequential damages that arise as a direct or indirect result of applying any part of this material which is provided in this application for educational purposes only and is without warranties.**

