

Simple Secrets to Eliminate Acne

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Imagine for a moment that you're a self-conscious teen about to deal with a nerve-racking social situation. Now imagine that you're hit with a major acne flare-up!

Sound familiar?

We've all been there: the excitement and nervousness leading up to that most momentous of adolescent events – The First Date. So far things are going great: you've found the perfect outfit, the coolest destination, and even the dream date!

Everything is running smoothly – that is, until you look in the mirror and are shocked and horrified to see a new, angry acne flare-up glaring back at you!

Immediately your nervous excitement is replaced with anxiety; the air is suddenly thick with doom and gloom – your fate is sealed: the big date is officially ruined. “I may as well cancel it,” you miserably decide, “and drop out of the social scene altogether – how can I possibly show my face like this?”



It's not hard to identify with, is it? Anyone who's ever experienced the awful timing of an adolescent acne attack knows it's the most surefire way to ruin your mood, sour your evening, and deflate your already-tenuous teenaged confidence.

With acne affecting four out of five adolescents worldwide, it is a major cause of embarrassment for many teenagers, often hurting their confidence, self-esteem, and peace of mind.

But it's not just teens who are affected.

The psychological toll is no less significant for adults with chronic forms of the condition. And many of the 17 million Americans who suffer from acne are adults.

Acne, whether severe or not, is extremely burdensome. Typically, one suffering from acne feels self-conscious, embarrassed and helpless. For many individuals suffering from acne, the embarrassment also leads to a sense of alienation, preventing them from socializing and feeling confident.

Experts state that many people underestimate the self-consciousness and social stigma that come with having acne.

It's not hard to understand then, why many people spend so much money and energy trying to find a solution to their acne affliction. After going through a slew of ineffective over-the-counter products, many turn to prescription acne medications.

Drug companies and doctors aggressively promote the idea that heavy, dangerous medications are the best, and only, solution to acne. They couldn't be more wrong! These medications have harmful side effects, and attempt to treat the symptoms of acne while neglecting its cause.

This is why, even though acne medications are widely approved and strongly promoted, I am firmly opposed to the use of these medications.

In fact, **acne is one of the easiest and most responsive medical conditions to treat without drugs.**

With all the misleading myths about acne, the importance of diet has been neglected and flat-out denied – until now. There have been some exciting recent developments about acne, and you'll want to find out all about this breaking new evidence.

You'll discover why the cause of acne is so misunderstood, why your dermatologist's advice can be dangerously misleading, and how you can benefit from the exciting new research about acne's *real* cause – and cure.

Of course, the drug companies will deny this new evidence – so, read on, and decide for yourself!

Acne: So Misunderstood

With acne affecting about 85 percent of the U.S. population at some time in their life, it is the most common skin disease addressed by dermatologists.¹ But for such a pervasive ailment, it is astonishingly misunderstood and mistreated.

One of the few things authorities can agree on is that most people get the type of acne called acne vulgaris, an inflammatory condition of your skin that usually appears on your face, neck, shoulders, back and chest.

A bacterium in your skin causes pimples to become red and swollen, in some cases leading to painful lesions. But this is about where the consensus ends!



There is much dispute about the causes and proper treatments for acne. If you try an Internet search you'll get thousands of hits for the newest "miracle cures," and a visit to

the dermatologist will likely yield a prescription for the latest, “new and improved” acne drug.

However, these acne medications don't work. People suffering from acne try “cure” after “cure” that never live up to the hype. Many see their breakouts returning again and again, as their acne is temporarily alleviated by medications but never eradicated. Doctors call this “chronic acne” and say that this perpetual cycle is inevitable and can't be helped.

But nothing could be further from the truth!

It's not that your acne is chronic; it's that the conventional treatment isn't the right one.

Why such a barrage of useless, misleading, ineffective, and even harmful treatments? Acne medications designed to fight bacteria are just a band-aid solution. These treatments only address the symptoms of acne, and completely sidestep the root cause of acne breakouts!

In light of the evidence from the newest research, it's becoming increasingly obvious that dermatologists are embarrassingly off-the-mark in their analysis of acne.

Though conventional medicine has long promoted the notion that the root cause of acne is bacteria and genetics, more and more proof is coming to light that this is not the case. Rather, even the other side is beginning to admit the truth of the matter: the root cause of acne is environmental factors, especially diet.

As a consequence to this exciting new discovery, a revolution in the understanding of effective acne treatment is beginning to emerge.

New research on the effectiveness of environmental changes, especially dietary changes, has demonstrated the astonishing power of a low-grain diet, along with other natural steps, to clear up acne—for good!



The research is so new that the amazing implications are just now beginning to be realized. Soon this will be all over the web pages and the airwaves, right? Wrong. You likely won't be informed of the newest developments unless you do some sleuthing!

If the drug company executives had their way, you'd never find out about this breaking new evidence. Makes perfect sense when you consider what's at stake: If word gets out that a healthy diet and lifestyle eliminates the need for expensive, dangerous medications, *how will the powerful drug corporations make their enormous profits?*

Conventional Treatment of Acne

Acne is commonly treated with antibiotics and other prescription drugs, and with topical creams and gels, both prescription and over-the-counter.

The current standard clinical treatment of acne is outlined in an April 2007 study, “Guidelines of Care for Acne Vulgaris Management,” which currently serves as a set of official guidelines for dermatologists.²

These new guidelines reaffirm the use of antibiotics as an “indispensable” acne treatment: “Systemic antibiotics are a standard of care in the management of moderate and severe acne and treatment-resistant forms of inflammatory acne.”³

What’s more, despite the mounting evidence against Accutane, a very powerful drug used in the treatment of acne, the authors of these official guidelines still advocate the use of this dangerous drug.⁴

Significantly, the authors’ recommendations have been fully approved by the American Academy of Dermatology as the current guidelines for the treatment of acne. These new guidelines are extremely influential, as they set the treatment standard at the clinical, corporate, and governmental levels.

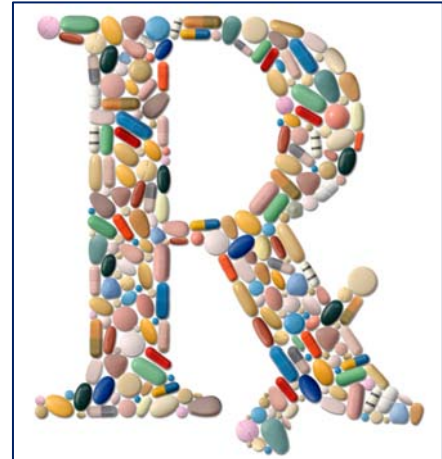
According to the American Academy of Dermatology,⁵ these guidelines:

- ✓ Determine appropriate clinical practice
- ✓ Shape federal regulations of medical practice as well as the pharmaceutical industry
- ✓ Affect spending and reimbursement decisions
- ✓ Influence advocacy efforts and public messaging

All this influence on doctors, drug companies, the federal government, and the public means that the significance of these recently published guidelines cannot be emphasized enough.

Disturbingly yet not surprisingly, these new guidelines reaffirm standard status quo procedure: the promotion of Accutane, along with a variety of oral and topical antibiotics.

The consequences of the authors’ suggestions are clear: heavy medications will be even more aggressively promoted, backed by increased corporate spending, biased federal regulations, misguided medical practice, and a deceived public.



Prescription Drugs and the Fight Against Bacteria: The Case For the Effectiveness of Acne Medications

Authorities and advocates of conventional acne medications hold that these prescription treatments work to fight acne in one or more of the following ways:⁶

- Reduce oil production
- Speed up skin cell turnover
- Fight bacterial infection
- Reduce inflammation

There are a variety of prescription medications available, both topical and oral. Topical prescription medications include topical antibiotics, lotions derived from vitamin A, and an assortment of other lotions. Oral prescription medications include oral antibiotics, Accutane, and birth control.

Topical treatments

Prescription lotions are said to work to:⁷

- Dry up oil
- Kill bacteria
- Facilitate sloughing of dead skin cells

Some topical prescription products, such as Tretinoin (Avita, Retin-A, Renova) and adapalene (Differin), are derived from vitamin A. They are supposed to work to:⁸

- Promote cell turnover
- Prevent plugging of your hair follicles

Topical antibiotics supposedly “work by killing excess skin bacteria.”⁹

Oral antibiotics

As the authors of the major 2007 study report, “Antibiotics have been widely used for many years in the management of acne.”¹⁰ According to the authors, there is evidence to legitimate the use of several antibiotics, including tetracycline, doxycycline, minocycline, and erythromycin.

Oral antibiotics are usually indicated for moderate to severe acne. Experts say that these drugs treat acne in two ways:¹¹

- Reduce bacteria
- Fight inflammation

Accutane (Isotretinoin)

Though its dangerous side effects are becoming increasingly infamous, the highly controversial drug Accutane remains an industry standard, the most widely prescribed treatment for serious acne. In fact, about 550,000 prescriptions are written for Accutane each year, and some 15 million have been issued since the drug came on the market.¹²

Many argue that Accutane is an effective and indispensable treatment for acne. As MayoClinic.com advises, “For deep cysts, antibiotics may not be enough. Isotretinoin (Accutane) is a powerful medication available for scarring cystic acne or acne that doesn’t respond to other treatments. This medicine is reserved for the most severe forms of acne.”¹³

While MayoClinic mentions Accutane’s dangerous side effects, it still affirms the drug to be “very effective.”



Mainstream medical opinion of Accutane not only promotes the drug’s effectiveness, it even denies the common knowledge of Accutane’s dangerous side effects!

Contradicting the established proof of Accutane’s link to depression and suicidal thoughts, the authors of the 2007 study contend:¹⁴

- “Treatment of severe acne with isotretinoin is often associated with mood improvement.”
- Depression and suicidal thoughts actually occur less often in people taking Accutane than in people of the same age not taking Accutane.
- “There is also evidence that the risk of depressed mood is no greater during isotretinoin therapy than during therapy of an age-matched acne group treated with conservative therapy.”

As we’ll see later, though, even the advocates of Accutane don’t try to argue against the reality of serious side effects such as depression and fetal damage.

Acne Medications are Hazardous to Your Health

For a moment, let’s accept the claim that these conventional acne treatments actually work. Later we’ll see why these treatments can never live up to what they’re supposed to do – but even if we assume that mainstream opinion is correct, you should *still* avoid these drugs at all costs!

Taking such medications comes at a major price, as these treatments cause many negative effects, and some are proven to be seriously dangerous. Antibiotics often do

more harm than good, and one popular acne medication has been linked to depression and suicide.

What follows is some of the most shocking evidence of what conventional acne medications can do to harm your health, including the newest research about the dangers inherent in acne medication.

Accutane: Not Exactly the Miracle Cure-All for Acne That it's Promoted to Be

Once touted as the miracle acne drug, Accutane is now known to cause serious side effects that strongly outweigh any of the drug's potential benefits.

Depression and Suicide

We now have confirmation that Accutane is clearly associated with depression.

One study of 28 young adults used brain scans to compare a group taking Accutane with a group not taking Accutane over the course of four months.¹⁵ Before taking treatments, patients received positron emission tomography (PET) scans, which measured the activity regions in their brains. After four months, a second PET scan revealed no significant differences in the brain activity of those not taking Accutane.

However, those taking Accutane showed a 21 percent decrease in activity in the orbitofrontal cortex (the front part of the brain), which is the part of your brain that plays a critical role in mood and social interaction.

Even official regulation policy acknowledges the real danger of Accutane.

In fact, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has warned physicians and consumers about reports of "depression, psychosis, and rarely suicidal thoughts and actions" related to the use of Accutane.¹⁶

Patients using Accutane reported to the FDA that these psychological symptoms improved after stopping Accutane therapy, but worsened with re-start of the drug.

In light of this evidence, the labeling of the drug has been changed to strengthen the current warning about a risk of depression in patients using the drug.

As if this weren't enough confirmation of the link between Accutane and serious depression, there's now even more evidence. While the authors of the current acne treatment guidelines earlier contended that Accutane could actually promote a positive



mood, they ultimately admit that the opposite is true. According to the authors, “Mood disorders, depression, suicidal ideation, and suicides have been reported in patients taking this drug.”¹⁷

Next the authors try to sidestep the implications, arguing, “However, a causal relationship has not been established.”¹⁸ Significantly, though, this weak argument isn’t enough to overcome the mounting evidence against Accutane.

The authors of the 2007 guidelines themselves admit that it’s often the case that a patient who stops taking Accutane will experience an improved mood, and that the negative mood will return if the patient begins to take Accutane again.¹⁹

Ultimately, the authors cannot deny the strength of the evidence against the drug: “Nonetheless, patients must be made aware of this possibility [of serious side effects] and treating physicians should monitor patients for psychiatric adverse effects.”²⁰

In addition to depression and suicidal behavior, using Accutane may cause psychosis and aggressive behavior.

Fetal Damage

Accutane is one of the most dangerous drugs ever developed for pregnancy, and is guaranteed to produce fetal damage. Accutane has a category X for pregnancy, which means that it causes birth defects in nearly 100 percent of pregnant women. According to MayoClinic.com:

“Isotretinoin is associated with severe birth defects, so it can't be taken by pregnant women or women who may become pregnant during the course of treatment or within several weeks of concluding treatment. In fact, the drug carries such serious potential side effects that women of reproductive age must participate in a Food and Drug Administration-approved monitoring program to receive a prescription for the drug.”²¹

Even Hoffmann-La Roche, the drug company that manufactures Accutane, admits these serious dangers.

Hoffmann-La Roche has continually instituted and revised restrictions on the use of Accutane, including requirements aimed at preventing pregnancy in women taking the drug.

Despite the company's efforts, 2,000 pregnancies occurred in women taking Accutane between 1982 and 2000, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.²²



What's more, even guidelines advocating the use of Accutane acknowledge the prohibitive dangers of Accutane for pregnant women and women who may become pregnant. According to the authors of the current treatment guidelines, "Because of the teratogenic effects of isotretinoin on the fetus, the FDA and the manufacturers have approved a new risk management program for isotretinoin."²³

Even More Side Effects to Accutane

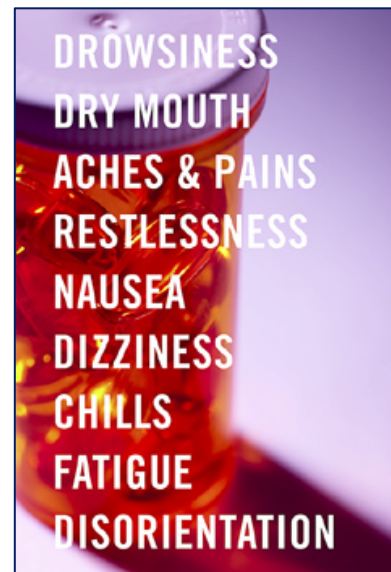
As if serious depression and birth defects weren't enough, the newest research reveals even more side effects to Accutane.

According to MayoClinic.com, studies show that use of Accutane is associated with:²⁴

- Increased levels of triglycerides and cholesterol in your blood
- Increased liver enzyme levels
- Development of inflammatory bowel disease

New evidence from the official 2007 report brings to light several more serious side effects of Accutane.

According to the authors of the study, Accutane "interacts with many of the biologic systems of the body, and consequently has a significant pattern of adverse effects."²⁵



As the authors explain, additional side effects have been commonly observed, including:²⁶

- Headaches
- Damage to the mucocutaneous, musculoskeletal, and ophthalmic systems
- Impairment of your central nervous system
- Hyperostosis
- Premature epiphyseal closure
- Bone demineralization

Astonishingly, the authors then dismiss the importance of these findings: "Most of the adverse effects are temporary and resolve after the drug is discontinued."²⁷ Moreover, the authors continue, these side effects have been mostly observed with high dosages and prolonged usage of Accutane.

With this justification, the authors strike a major blow against medical transparency and patient safety: "Therefore it is the unanimous opinion of the acne work group that routine screening for these issues is not required."²⁸ So, according to official treatment guidelines, as a patient on Accutane you would not even be screened for these serious side effects!

Despite the fact that the authors of the current acne treatment guidelines ultimately admit to the reality of Accutane's dangers, they still conclude by recommending that the use of the drug be expanded, rather than restricted! As the authors recommend:

"The approved indication for the use of oral isotretinoin has remained severe nodular treatment-resistant acne since the drug was introduced more than 20 years ago. However, it is the opinion of the expert work group that this drug is also indicated for all cases of acne that are either treatment-resistant or producing physical or psychological scarring."²⁹

Astonishing!

This recommendation is very dangerous, as it widens the scope of who should be allowed to take Accutane, encouraging doctors to prescribe the drug for even mild and moderate forms of acne.

Bad news – the incidence of depression, fetal damage, and other serious side effects will only increase and worsen.

Accutane: another example of a drug-based solution gone bad. This is especially sad, as changing your eating habits tend to resolve most cases of acne. Severe cases might require some additional, more sophisticated natural medical therapies, but rarely, if ever, should you risk your health with Accutane.

But Accutane isn't the only culprit. Misguidedly, conventional medicine attempts to treat acne with expensive antibiotics or topical creams that can be especially problematic because the drug may kill the good bacteria along with the bad.

Antibiotics: They Do More Harm Than Good

Many dermatologists prescribe long-term antibiotic treatments for acne. Even though oral antibiotics are widely promoted, it is important to NOT use these medications, as they will inevitably lead to more complications than they solve. This is because every time you take an antibiotic, you kill beneficial bacteria along with the problematic bacteria.

For instance, antibiotics invariably kill beneficial bacteria in your colon and set the stage for problems with chronic yeast infections.³⁰

And now there's brand-new evidence about harmful side effects to antibiotics, straight from the horse's mouth. According to the authors of the official treatment guidelines, "the use of oral antibiotics for the treatment of acne may be associated with adverse effects."³¹

As reported by these researchers, here are some common antibiotics, and the serious complications they are now proven to cause.³²

- ✓ Erythromycin can cause damage to your teeth or skeleton.
- ✓ Doxycycline is associated with photosensitivity.
- ✓ Minocycline is now known to cause “pigment deposition in your skin [most often in acne scars], mucous membranes and teeth.”
- ✓ Minocycline also causes other rare reactions, including “autoimmune hepatitis, a systemic lupus erythematosus-like syndrome, and serum sickness-like reactions.”

What’s more, ALL oral antibiotics are associated with vaginal candidiasis.

If you’re not convinced by now that **antibiotics are NOT the solution to acne**, read on for a discussion of why **these treatments aren’t just harmful – they’re also useless to clear up acne!**

Should All Acne Medications be Avoided?

Not all medications are harmful, and there is no question that certain drugs save people's lives every day. However, prescription drugs are the fourth leading cause of death in the United States, and this is because of the overreliance on them and their inappropriate use.

I have no problems with topical Retin A, which is most likely beneficial and probably prevents and even reverses several types of skin cancers.

However, Accutane should be used with great caution and only if you have not seen improvement with the nutrition plan and consulting with a natural medical clinician.

While Accutane is the most dangerous acne drug, there are serious side effects to most acne medications, as outlined above.

Who is most at risk?

Those who are most vulnerable to the dangerous effects of acne medications include pregnant women, women who may become pregnant, people vulnerable to depression, and teenagers.



As for who is most vulnerable to the depression Accutane causes, the authors of the 2007 study say, “The symptoms mentioned are quite common in adolescents and young adults, the age range of patients who are likely to receive isotretinoin.”³³

In addition to Accutane, it would be best to avoid ALL medications, even over-the-counter ones, if there is any chance of pregnancy. As the Mayo Clinic advises, “Oral prescription medications for acne should not be used during pregnancy, especially during the first trimester.”³⁴ No drug has been proven to be completely safe during pregnancy.

If the dangers of acne medicine aren't enough to convince you to ignore your dermatologist's advice, there's another major reason: **acne medications simply don't work.**

The Acne Treatment Myth Exposed

For every theory on acne, there's a corresponding product to be sold – so it's not surprising that with all the confusion about what causes acne, there are a myriad of treatment options on the market.

If you've had to deal with chronic acne or even just the occasional breakout, you've probably tested “cure” after “cure” that never delivers on its promises. Despite all the money and energy spent in the effort to treat existing acne and prevent future breakouts, many people are frustrated to see their acne continue to return, again and again.

In fact, the whole gamut of available acne medications is powerless to truly treat acne: these treatments may temporarily alleviate the symptoms, but never actually eradicate the acne. This is because **acne medications designed to fight bacteria or hormones completely neglect the root cause of acne breakouts!** That's what keeps people coming back to the doctor's office and the pharmacy counter again and again: these medications simply don't work.

Accutane Doesn't Solve the Root Cause of Acne -- Relapse is Common

New evidence from Accutane's advocates themselves proves that relapses are common with Accutane. As the authors of the 2007 study guidelines admit:

“Some patients experience a relapse of acne after the first course of treatment with isotretinoin. The panel feels relapses are more common in younger adults or when lower doses are used.”³⁵

Antibiotics Don't Work -- Bacterial Resistance is Increasing

The newest research now proves that antibiotics are useless to stop the development and progression of acne. According to the authors of one 2007 study, "Bacterial resistance to antibiotics is an increasing problem."³⁶ This evidence is even more significant because it comes straight from the advocates of antibiotics themselves!

The authors elaborate, "A major problem affecting antibiotic therapy of acne has been bacterial resistance, which has been increasing."³⁷

What's more, while resistance is most common with erythromycin, these authors confirm that resistance has been observed with ALL antibiotics used for acne.



It may be hard to believe that conventional doctors are beginning to acknowledge the problems with the conventional approach to acne treatment, but these doctors conclude by advising *against* the use of antibiotics for acne:

"For this reason, it is the opinion of the work group that patients with less severe forms of acne should not be treated with oral antibiotics, and where possible the duration of such therapy should be limited."³⁸

Uncovering the True Cause of Acne

Why are conventional acne treatments so ineffective?

Because they are based on misleading ideas of what causes acne. Drug companies and doctors have aggressively promoted the idea that acne is caused by factors like bacteria and genetics. It's not surprising, then, that conventional understandings of acne deny the significance of diet as a causal factor.

Thanks to recent scientific research, we are now beginning to have a better understanding of the genetics of acne. Scientists recently discovered the genome (gene sequencing) of the bacteria called *propionibacterium acnes*, which is found on the surface of everyone's skin and is a major cause of acne.³⁹

This research, in support of mainstream medical as well as popular opinion, stresses that acne flare-ups result from the way bacteria blocks your pores. However, a knowledge of the bacteria that "causes" acne doesn't actually get us very far – because medications that attempt to fight this bacterium are only addressing the *symptoms* of acne, and not the cause!

Latest Research Reveals the Missing Causal Link

Some say acne is a disease of Western civilization because studies have found that the condition is virtually nonexistent in non-westernized societies, where refined carbohydrates and sugar are rarely eaten. The findings make a strong case for the significant role of environmental factors in acne.⁴⁰

In fact, in light of the newest research and evidence, it's becoming increasingly obvious that dermatologists are embarrassingly off-the-mark in their analysis of acne.

More and more proof is coming to light that the root cause of acne is not bacteria or genetics, but environmental factors, especially your diet.

As a consequence to this exciting new discovery, a revolution in the understanding of effective acne treatment is beginning to emerge. New research on the effectiveness of environmental changes, especially dietary changes, has demonstrated the astonishing power of a low-grain diet, along with other natural steps, to clear up acne—for good!⁴¹



This is because the right diet will create an environment that does not allow the bacteria to grow. In fact, I can assure you that acne is actually one of the easiest and most responsive problems to treat without drugs. But you certainly wouldn't know this from talking to a dermatologist or viewing a pharmaceutical advertisement!

Conflict of Interest and Corporate Bias

Drug companies, regulatory agencies that legitimate the use of acne medications, and doctors all play a role in the perpetuation of harmful myths about acne causation and treatment.

How YOU Are Being Deceived

While many people associate acne with an unhealthy diet, dermatologists usually claim that diet has nothing to do with acne.

But this is not the reality. In fact, grains and sugars are the primary reason why most suffer with acne.

Yet, nearly every time diet is mentioned in a discussion of acne, it is emphasized that diet plays no role. How absolutely ridiculous. I, like many others, had to suffer because the "experts" didn't even understand the basics of health and nutrition.

A Healthy Diet Can Not be "Sold"

So you may be wondering why doctors typically don't tell you that diet influences acne.

Well, doctors cannot sell you a healthy diet, and they are under strong influence by the drug companies to prescribe expensive topical acne creams and antibiotics.

No one is going to get rich from recommending a healthy diet to heal acne, except maybe you when you start saving the money that you were spending on expensive acne medications.



How is the Lie Perpetuated?

The drug companies are highly influential, and I believe are a major part of what is wrong with conventional medicine. Many of you reading this likely remember that it was not too long ago when there was no direct drug company to patient advertising. Now it is rampant, even extending to kids.

Research shows that between 1994 and 1999 there was a five-fold increase in direct-to-consumer spending, a form of drug company advertising through print, radio, online and TV ads.

And statistics reveal that in just the first six months of 1999 alone, nearly \$1 billion was spent on this type of advertising.⁴²

Since 1999, the pharmaceutical advertising expenditure has exploded. Currently, drug companies spend \$4 billion every year to market their drugs to you, and they spend \$16 billion to influence physicians.⁴³

And that's not all; to ensure laws beneficial to the sale of their products, drug companies employ almost 1,300 lobbyists, including 40 former members of Congress. They have spent more than \$750 million over the past seven years on lobbying alone. According to government records analyzed by the Center for Public Integrity, that's more than any other industry!⁴⁴

With all that money being spent to ensure they have enormous influence on the government, doctors, and patients, it is no wonder why two-thirds of doctor visits result in a drug being prescribed, and spending for prescription drugs is the fastest-growing category of health care expenditures.

With such a huge mass-marketing enterprise, these ads have had major effects on many people's level of medical education and awareness, the cost of prescription drugs, and the potential for over-prescribing. It is largely because of the drug companies'

influence in medicine that most people, and doctors, believe there is a pill solution for just about every problem.

So once again, why is the true cause of acne kept secret from the public? Because doctors and drug companies do not receive a profit when you select foods that prevent you from developing acne in the first place.

Fight Acne Holistically

Bottom line: if you stick with conventional dermatological treatment, you're falling prey to drug company manipulation and misrepresentation of the truth about acne (and, to a large extent, about nearly every other health issue!). If you follow your doctor's orders, you'll experience temporary alleviation only to watch in disbelief as the vicious cycle begins again...and again!

In order to resolve your acne once and for all, you will need to address the *true* cause of your acne and thus cut off this cycle at its roots.

Bacteria and hormones are significant factors, but they do not exist in a vacuum. In order to address how acne develops in the first place, you must look at the environmental factors that set off the chain reaction that leads to acne flare-ups. Thus, it cannot be emphasized enough how important the correct diet is to eliminating acne. Other environmental factors, such as stress levels, are also indispensable to address as part of a holistic preventative treatment regimen.

There ARE solutions to the acne epidemic.

What follows are the essential instructions on what you can do to treat and prevent acne in a safe, non-toxic way.

Food That Fights Acne: Basic Dietary Recommendations for Clear Skin

A recent study has shown that "worsening perceived diet quality is significantly associated with acne exacerbation."⁴⁵ In my experience I have found that acne clears up in the majority of people when they are eating a diet that is low in grains and sugar, and right for their nutritional type. This is why I can assure you that the real "cure" is to change your diet to one based on your nutritional type.

Modify Your Diet Based on Your Own Unique Nutritional Type™

Like your car, your body was designed for a certain correct type of fuel ... that is, a certain correct blend of the right food types. The further you deviate from this ideal, the more health problems are likely. Thus, one of the most important steps you should take

is to learn your Nutritional Type™ and eat according to it.⁴⁶ What may be very healthy for others is not necessarily as healthy for you, and vice-versa, and eating according to your Nutritional Type™ is really the only way to ascertain what is really good for you.

As explained in my new book, Take Control of Your Health,⁴⁷ you belong to one of three general types:

- * Protein
- * Carb
- * Mixed

Protein types do better on low-carbohydrate, high-protein and high-fat diets. Carb types normally feel best when the majority of their food is carbohydrate. If your Nutritional Type™ is mixed, your requirements are between the carb and protein types.

Your activity and stress levels will affect and alter the types of food you need to feel your best. While some people will have a need for the same ratios of protein, fat and carbs at each meal, others will discover that they need very different ratios at different meals in order to derive optimum energy, well being and performance.

Understanding Carbohydrates

Even if your Nutritional Type™ is carbohydrate, it is important to remember that not all carbs are created equal.

Simple carbohydrates are sugars such as those found in candy, fruits and baked goods. **Your best bet is to strictly limit or completely remove these sugars from your diet.**

If you must have some sugar, RAW honey or stevia are the best substitutes.

Complex carbohydrates are starches found in beans, nuts, vegetables and whole grains.

Your body prefers carbs found in vegetables over carbs in grains. This is because the digestion of vegetable carbs slows the breakdown to simple sugars like glucose, and also decreases insulin levels. Conversely, grain carbohydrates increase insulin levels. That is why, to fight acne, **most grains should be avoided.**

Low-Grain Diet Clears Up Acne For Good

Eliminating grains, sugars, sweets, potatoes and corn helps radically improve acne for most people.

This is because refined carbohydrates set off a chain reaction involving insulin, hormones, and bacteria, ultimately causing an acne breakout!⁴⁸

It has been definitively proven that eating refined carbohydrates and sugar leads to a surge of insulin and an insulin-like growth factor called IGF-1 in your body.

Highly processed grains such as refined breads and cereals are digested quickly, raising your sugar level. Your body responds to the excess sugar by producing high levels of insulin and insulin-like growth factor (IGF-1).



This can lead to an excess of male hormones, which cause pores in your skin to secrete sebum, a greasy substance that attracts acne-promoting bacteria. Additionally, IGF-1 causes skin cells known as keratinocytes to multiply, a process that is associated with acne.

It has also been shown that in contemporary societies, the rate of acne is up to 60 percent in 12-year-olds and 95 percent in 18-year-olds. In sharp contrast, in the Amazon and New Guinea acne is virtually unknown, as are refined sugars and grains.⁴⁹ So it's not surprising that dermatologists have also reported improvement in patients put on a low-carb diet.⁵⁰

In fact, a new study published in the July 2007 issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* gives even more evidence of the link between diet, insulin, and acne.⁵¹

The researchers explored how acne was affected by a low-glycemic diet compared with a high-glycemic diet. Simple carbs and sugars that increase insulin production are said to have a high glycemic load, while more complex carbs such as beans and vegetables have a low glycemic load.

According to the researchers, "the findings support the hypothesis of a relationship between acne and high insulin levels."⁵²

In fact, the results are evidence that a low-carb diet is an effective solution to acne: "The low-glycemic diet was associated with a significant reduction in total acne compared with the normal diet."⁵³

Since I struggled with acne for the first 40 years of my life, I wish I would have known this information when I was younger. However, since I have come to understand the influence of grains on health, acne has been a non-issue for me.

The worst offenders here are sugars and grains, but I suspect that the gluten in wheat also causes worsening of symptoms in many that is completely independent of its effect on insulin. This is especially an issue in those that have rosacea.

So, most people--likely over 85 percent of the U.S. population--will experience clearer skin from a reduction in grain intake. This strategy works for the majority of people, but

may not work for everyone. Carb types actually can do quite well with grains, but remember, this is likely to only be about 15 percent of the population at best.

Food is Your Medicine

You will find that the Nutritional Typing™ program, outlined in detail in my book and on Mercola.com,⁵⁴ is really quite simple and straightforward. By learning to analyze your reactions to the food you eat, you can begin to fine-tune each meal to the ratios of proteins, fats and carbs that are just right for you.

Remember that you should feel terrific one hour after you eat. If you are still having food cravings or your energy level is lower, these are giant clues that you are likely not eating appropriately for your Nutritional Type™.

Generally speaking, eating a meal that is right for your Nutritional Type™ should produce marked and lasting improvement in your energy, your mental capacities, your emotional well-being, and leave you feeling well-satisfied for several hours.⁵⁵



To get full details on this essential principle and to assess your nutritional type, I highly encourage you to read my new book, *Take Control of Your Health*.⁵⁶ The book includes the means to learn and understand your own Nutritional Type™ and gear your diet precisely toward the foods that are right for you – and that will clear up your acne for good!

If you implement all the holistic health changes I advise and still do not see an improvement with your acne, you should see a natural health practitioner for a personalized preventative treatment plan. You may also want to try a vitamin A treatment regimen, described near the end of this report.

Stop Stressing!

Stress can potentially worsen just about every bodily ailment, including acne. That's why it is so important to have an effective tool to help you with your stress before it becomes overwhelming.

Stress is a Major Cause of Acne

Recent studies substantiate the hypothesis that stress can actually aggravate acne. One study involving college students found a connection between acne flare-ups and stress from final exams.⁵⁷ While the link between acne and high stress levels has been

well-established, it had not yet been proven that stress is a direct cause of acne – until now.

The researchers found that “subjects who had the greatest increases in stress during examination periods also had the greatest exacerbations in acne severity.” This suggests that “emotional stress from external sources may have a significant influence on acne.”

While it has been argued that the stress associated with acne is an effect of acne rather than the cause of it, the researchers stress that this new evidence proves otherwise: “It is more likely that increasing stress exacerbates acne instead of the reverse relationship.”

There you have it – definitive proof that stress does indeed lead to acne.

Reduce Your Stress for Clearer Skin

There are a variety of ways that you can reduce your stress levels and prevent acne from developing. **Try these proven stress-busters:**

- **Just Breathe...**

You can actually take control of your breathing in an intentional way, and harness it to maximize the benefits of relaxation and stress reduction. In order to relax and relieve stress, try meditation, yoga, and breathing exercises.

- **Get Some Sleep!**

A night of quality sleep is an essential foundation for lower stress levels during the day. Your nightly sleep cycle should be a time of rest, peace, and rejuvenation.

Getting enough quality sleep each night is like drinking enough water each day – it’s absolutely essential to the good health of virtually every aspect of your body’s functioning. You may already know that healthy sleep patterns will improve your energy levels and mood.



But did you know that a good night's sleep could help decrease your stress levels and lead to clearer skin?

Stress and exhaustion are caused by adrenal burnout, and during sleep your adrenal glands are restored and repaired. So if you’re not getting enough sleep, then your adrenal glands stay depleted – perpetuating your high stress levels, and thus your acne as well.

If you struggle with experiencing beneficial sleep, try these strategies for excellent sleeping:

- Avoid before-bed snacks, particularly grains and sugars.
- Sleep in complete darkness or as close to it as possible.
- No TV right before bed.
- Read something that will help you to relax, rather than stimulate you.

• **Don't Worry; Be Happy**

Research has shown that optimists have lower stress levels than pessimists. One study⁵⁸ found two potential reasons for the optimists' lower levels of stress: strong friendships and superior coping skills. Time with friends is a great stress-reliever, and research shows that optimists tend to have stronger friendships.

Also, optimists cope with their stress differently than pessimists. Optimists are more likely to rely on an effective coping skill called positive reinterpretation and growth, rather than ineffective coping methods such as denial or disengagement.

Positive reinterpretation is looking for the silver lining in a difficult situation, or interpreting the setback as a challenge.



• **Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)**

The most natural, helpful tool to relieve stress I recommend is the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT).⁵⁹ EFT involves tapping your body's energy meridians and voicing positive affirmations to clear emotional blocks, thus restoring your mind and body's balance. EFT can help you:

- Remove Negative Emotions
- Reduce Food Cravings
- Reduce or Eliminate Pain
- Implement Positive Goals

EFT is a powerful but easy technique for quickly resolving emotional distress. As a psychological acupuncture technique, EFT can help you to channel your stress-related thoughts and leave you feeling calmer and more able to face your challenges. It can even relieve physical complaints such as chronic pain, allergic symptoms, and much more.

This treatment is generally permanent, relatively easy to apply, boasts a higher than 80

percent success rate and is free of negative side effects. Learn how you can do it yourself with my free EFT report,⁶⁰ available on Mercola.com.

Water: Drink Up!

Many common ailments stem from not drinking enough water, including acne. According to acneway.com, "The skin is the largest organ in the human body, and must be properly hydrated to work correctly."⁶¹

Without sufficient hydration, your skin cannot function in harmony with the rest of your body. When you don't drink enough water, your cell growth is stunted, which then leads to acne (and also premature wrinkles, poor skin tone, and generally unhealthy skin!).

Drinking plenty of water is an essential part of your acne-clearing regimen. In fact, according to acneway.com, "One of the best natural remedies for treating acne is water."⁶² Water is one of nature's most effective and indispensable healing agents -- and best of all, it's very inexpensive!



Every day, drink enough water so that your urine is a pale yellow color. If your urine is bright yellow, you probably need to drink more water.

Hydrating your body facilitates cell growth and regeneration, and washes away dead skin cells. Drinking water will not only fight existing acne and prevent the development of new acne; it will also improve your skin tone!

What NOT To Drink

With the dizzying assortment of brightly packaged sodas, juices, energy drinks, and other artificial beverages on the market, it's hard to remember that plain old water is what our body truly craves!

To clear up your acne, kick your toxic drinking habits:

- **No Soft Drinks or Energy Drinks**

Despite their claims to healthiness and naturalness, nearly all of these expensive, artificial drinks are loaded with sugars and toxins that cause acne.

- **No Juice**

Juices are harmful because they're loaded with sugars, so skip the juice and eat the fruit instead – though even fruits contain some acne-causing sugar, and should be consumed in moderation.

- **No Milk**

As the link between dairy products and acne has been firmly established for years, even some conventional dermatologists are beginning to advocate that a healthy, acne-fighting diet must completely eliminate milk. This is because milk contains acne-causing iodine and growth hormones.

According to University at Buffalo dermatologist Harvey Arbesman, M.D., "It has been well-established since the 1960s that iodine intake can exacerbate acne."⁶³ Studies have established that the levels of iodine in milk remain significantly high, suggesting a causal link between the iodine in milk and acne.



Because of this, Arbesman said, "I've advised my acne patients for years to decrease their dairy intake."

But it's not just the unhealthy iodine levels that cause acne – acne flare-ups are also triggered by the excessive amounts of hormones found in milk and other dairy products. Arbesman said that the combination of hormones and iodine found in dairy products could work together to cause and worsen acne.

In light of the mounting evidence against pasteurized milk, the benefits of raw milk are now widely recognized.⁶⁴ In fact, raw milk typically does not contain any of the acne-causing growth hormones found in pasteurized milk.

So how do the iodine levels in raw milk compare with pasteurized milk?

In fact, all cow's milk naturally has iodine. Actually, pasteurization destroys 20 percent of the iodine present in raw milk.⁶⁵ However, pasteurized milk, produced through conventional farming practices, still contains higher levels of iodine. This is because, as Dr. Arbesman pointed out, "Farmers give their cows iodine-fortified feed to prevent infection."⁶⁶

And according to researcher Dr. Thomas C. Hemling, an expert on milk production practices, "The direct relationship between feed additive levels and iodine milk levels has been documented in several studies."⁶⁷ Undeniably, conventional milk contains unnatural levels of iodine that are proven to exacerbate your acne.⁶⁸

Therefore, if you drink milk, you should absolutely choose raw over pasteurized. Raw milk still contains acne-causing iodine, but at potentially healthier levels, and it also contains beneficial bacteria and healthy fats that are nonexistent in pasteurized milk. Dr. Hemling noted, "In a survey of raw milk from California dairy farms (13) before and after a voluntary reduction of dietary iodine supplements, a significant reduction in the milk iodine level was observed."⁶⁹

While there are no studies on raw milk that we are aware of, it would seem reasonable to test the use of raw, organic, preferably grass-fed milk, and if it makes the acne worse, then discontinue it.

Though raw milk has not been specifically associated with acne,⁷⁰ its natural iodine may still trigger acne flare-ups.⁷¹ In the interest of eradicating your acne once and for all, then, it seems wise to eliminate milk and other dairy products from your diet altogether.

Vitamin A

In addition to following my dietary guidelines, you can use high doses of non-synthetic vitamin A to achieve very similar results as Accutane, with virtually none of the side effects.⁷² However, I do not recommend using this protocol unless you are under the care of a knowledgeable health care provider.

Keep in mind that it is necessary to use only high-quality natural vitamin A, as this will limit its potential toxicity.

High doses of synthetic vitamin A will likely lead to complications.

In this case, non-synthetic vitamin A (my favorite is emulsified vitamin A from Biotics Research) is very helpful. In order for the treatment to be effective, you need to use a high dose of 100,000-200,000 IU per day.⁷³ The dose should not be used for longer than several months, as toxicity could be an issue if taken much longer.



You can use doses as high as 300,000 units per day for short periods as long as you are careful to discontinue the vitamin if any unusual symptoms develop, such as headaches or nausea, which are the most troublesome.

This high dosage is generally only needed for a few weeks. After this high dosage period, the dose should be decreased to 100,000 units for 1-3 months, and then discontinued.

Newer studies suggest this dosing will probably not cause pregnancy complications, but it should still be stressed that if there is a possibility that you will become pregnant, you should not use the vitamin A treatment regimen.

Prevention is the Best Cure

Remember that acne likely results from a combination of dietary and emotional factors. Addressing both sides of the equation will give you the most beneficial results.

If you work on reducing your stress levels, be sure to drink plenty of water, and make a commitment to eating the right foods for your nutritional type and avoiding grains and sugar, you should experience clearer skin, once and for all!

Recommended Reading

[Take Control of Your Health](http://products.mercola.com/take-control), by Dr. Joseph Mercola
<http://products.mercola.com/take-control>

[Take Control of Your Health With My Nutrition Plan](http://www.mercola.com/nutritionplan/index.htm), Mercola.com
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