

Acne and Diet

Acne is a common skin condition that causes discomfort, embarrassment and, in some cases, pain and irritation. There are many misconceptions surrounding the causes and prevention of acne, including how diet can affect the frequency and severity of acne breakouts. While acne has traditionally been a common complaint of adolescents and teenagers, many people struggle with the condition throughout their adult lives. Acne affects more than ninety percent of the world's population. It is not limited by age, or race, or sex. Acne is the most common skin disorder treated by dermatologists, with most patients being teenagers and adults.

Some scientific research has suggested that acne is caused by physiological factors like hormones and genetics. Others believe that environmental factors including bacteria can cause breakouts. For many years, it has also been debated that diet may contribute to the acne condition. Acne and diet is an issue that has spent many years under the spotlight. Although some dermatologists claim that diet has nothing to do with the formation of acne, many still hold that acne and diet do indeed have a certain link. It does appear that the food we eat may well play a role in the development of acne.

Certain studies have shown that eating refined carbohydrates and sugars can lead to a surge of insulin, as well as an insulin-like growth factor known as IGF-1. When IGF-1 is released in the body, it can lead to an excess of male hormones called androgens. These hormones are deemed to be the most potent cause of acne formations. Further, the acne and diet connection maintains that when an excess amount of male hormones is produced, the pores of the skin will secrete sebum, an oily or greasy substance that generally pulls the attention of acne-causing bacteria. In addition, this process triggers the IGF-1 to cause skin cells known as keratinocytes to duplicate and multiply. This activity further contributes to the formation of acne.

Studies conducted on residents of the island of Papua, New Guinea, and the people of Paraguay have contributed further to the link between acne and diet. The results of this particular study led researchers to believe that a diet rich with grains can contribute to acne. Limited grains can optimize health benefits, and a no-grain diet may be beneficial in preventing acne.

The acne and diet issue remains one of the hottest topics in the medical field, however lack of funding may hinder the amount of actual research that is being conducted. Some critics have gone as far as to claim that doctors and dermatologists will claim that diet does not affect acne, so that they may sell more pharmaceutical treatments.

Poor nutrition contributes to many diseases. Of course, a healthy diet is important to overall well being, so it only stands to reason that eating a proper diet will help keep your skin healthy, too. If you find yourself in a constant battle against acne, remember to fight the physiological factors with a proper diet, and use the right treatments to combat the environmental aggravators.