

Acne



Acne is characterized by the presence of blackheads, pimples, small superficial sebaceous cysts and scars. There are over half a dozen forms of acne. All of them are concerned with sebaceous glands or the glands connected with hair follicles. The most common form of acne is blackheads. The areas chiefly affected are the forehead, temples, cheeks, and chin, the chest and back. In rare cases, almost the entire body may be covered with black heads with extensive scarring.

Treatment

The treatment of acne by the administration of salve or ointment does not serve any purpose. They only suppress the action of the sebaceous glands temporarily. In nature cure, the main emphasis is on diet and certain water applications. To begin with the patient should resort to all -fruit diet for about a week. IN this regimen, there should be three meals a day, consisting of fresh juicy fruits, such as apples, pears, grapes, grape-fruit, pineapple and peaches. Citrus fruits, bananas, dried, stewed or tinned fruits should not be taken. Unsweetened lemon or plain water, either hot or cold, should be drunk and nothing else. During this period, warm -water enema should be taken daily to cleanse the bowels and all other measures adopted to eradicate constipation.

After a week of all fruit diet, the patient can gradually adopt a well-balanced diet. Emphasis should be on raw foods, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, sprouted seeds, raw nuts and whole grain cereals, especially millet and brown rice. Further shorter periods on the all-fruits for three days, or so may be necessary at a monthly interval till the condition of the skin improves. Strict attention to diet is essential for recovery. Starchy, protein and fatty foods, should be restricted. Meats, sugar, strong tea or coffee, condiments, pickles, refined and

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processed foods should all be avoided, as also soft drinks, candies, ice cream and products made with sugar and white flour.

Two vitamins, namely, niacin and vitamin A have been used successfully to treat acne. The vitamin therapy which may comprise a niacin, 100 mg. three times daily and vitamin A in large doses upto 1,50,000 units per day should not exceed one month. Vitamin E is also vitally important to prevent scarring from acne and in removing old scars. Another effective remedy in the realm of nutrition that seems to offer new promise of help for acne is zinc. It has shown dramatic results in some cases. Zinc should be taken in therapeutic doses of 50 mg. three times a day. After noticeable improvement it can be gradually reduced.

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Local Treatment

As regards local treatment, hot fomentation should be applied to open up the pores and squeeze the waste matter. Then rinse with cold water. Sun and air baths by exposing the whole body to sun and air are highly beneficial. The healing packs made of grated cucumber, oatmeal cooked in milk, and cooked, creamed carrots used externally, have been found to be effective. The orange peel is valuable in the treatment of acne. The peel, pounded well with water on a piece of stone, should be applied to the affected areas. The lemon has also proved beneficial in removing pimples and acne . It should be applied regularly.

A teaspoonful of coriander juice, mixed with a pinch of turmeric powder, is another effective home remedy for pimples and blackheads. The mixture should be applied to the face after thoroughly washing it, every night before retiring.

The juice of raw potatoes has also proved very valuable in clearing skin blemishes. This cleansing results from high content of potassium sulphur, phosphorous and chlorine in the potato. These elements are, however, of value only when the potato is raw as in this state they are composed of live organic atoms.

A hot Epsom-salt bath twice a week will be highly beneficial in all cases of acne. This bath is prepared by adding one and a half kg. of Epsom -salt to 50 litres of water having a temperature of about 100 o F. The patient should remain in the bath from 25 to 35minutes till he perspires freely. After the bath the patient should cool off gradually.