A scourge of teenagers and adults alike, acne is one of the least understood of all skin conditions—and one of the most common. Usually associated with youth, acne can last well into the adult years and sometimes throughout life. It’s tough to treat, especially if approached as a dirty skin problem. And if not cared for properly, acne can produce scarring on the face and body that is difficult, if not impossible, to clear. Let’s look at some of the myths surrounding acne and replace them with the facts.

Myth: Any skin condition that causes pimples, blackheads, and redness is a form of acne.

Fact: There are other conditions that look like acne but aren’t.

Several other skin conditions look like acne. Rosacea is a hereditary skin condition that causes redness and can eventually develop tiny whiteheads and pimples if left untreated. Contact dermatitis can occur when the skin is exposed to harsh soaps or even sheets or pillowcases washed in harsh chemicals. It, too, can cause whiteheads, tiny pimples, and redness.

Gram negative folliculitis also looks like severe acne, producing pustules and deep cysts, but it’s caused by a different kind of bacteria than common acne. This is a severe skin infection requiring medical treatment. It’s usually the result of long-term tetracycline or topical antibiotic use, which sets up an environment for drug resistant bacteria. It can be treated with proper testing and administration of gram negative-specific antibiotics. It’s important to see a dermatologist for appropriate testing and diagnosis before assuming that your skin condition is common acne.

Myth: If I have acne, it means my skin is dirty. I should use a stronger cleanser.

Fact: Harsh cleansers and excessive

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It's true that excessive oil on the skin can clog pores, but harsh cleansers and soaps will irritate the skin, making acne worse. Use a mild cleanser that doesn't dry your skin. Wash twice a day—before applying makeup in the morning and before bed. It's essential to cleanse your skin prior to going to sleep to remove makeup, dirt, and pollutants. Use a makeup that is water-based and noncomedogenic (non-clogging), and avoid cold creams or lotions that leave a greasy film. Your skin care professional is trained to evaluate your skin type and offer guidance about proper daily skin care and products. Consult your esthetician about the skin care and makeup that's right for you.

**Myth:** Eating chocolate and fried foods makes me break out.

**Fact:** A healthy diet greatly contributes to healthy skin, but eating foods, such as chocolate, doesn't by itself cause acne breakouts.

Research has never been able to prove that eating specific foods—-even fried foods—causes acne. However, certain foods may aggravate it. On the other hand, eating a healthy diet contributes to better skin, especially foods rich in beta-carotene, such as spinach, apricots, peaches, sweet potatoes, and carrots. These provide the raw materials for the body to produce vitamin A, which is essential for cell growth and skin health. Citrus, tomatoes, and berries contain vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that strengthens the immune system and helps the body fight bacteria that can cause acne. A healthy diet provides the building blocks for healthier skin, but eating chocolate or sweets occasionally won’t cause acne flare-ups.

**Myth:** Sunbathing clears acne.

**Fact:** While limited exposure to UV rays from the sun may help clear existing pimples, extended exposure can make acne worse.

Extended sun exposure can damage skin, causing peeling and flaking, which translates into blocked pores—a primary cause of acne. In addition, sunbathing dries skin, which stimulates oil production. Excess oil combines with extra dead skin cells from sun damage, forming the perfect environment for blocked pores and breakouts. Ask your esthetician about oil-free sunscreen products for your specific skin type and use them daily. You'll not only help reduce acne, you'll also prevent skin damage that causes wrinkles.

**Myth:** I'll grow out of it.

**Fact:** Half of all adult women and one-fourth of all adult men have some degree of acne symptoms.

While it's more common in teenagers, acne is prevalent in adults as well. Some people make it through their teenage years only to develop acne later in life. The hormone changes experienced during pregnancy can cause adult-onset acne, but other conditions—the use of certain medications, exposure to chemicals, and other hormonal changes experienced in adulthood—can also produce acne symptoms long after adolescence.

**Myth:** I'm the only one who understands my complicated skin.

**Fact:** Your esthetician can help.

Your esthetician may recommend you see a dermatologist to help correctly diagnose and treat your skin condition, and she can certainly help direct you in the best ways to help support a healthy complexion. By guiding you to the right skin care products and makeup and teaching you how to use them, your skin care professional can be an important part of your team. Monthly facials specifically designed to gently cleanse and exfoliate your skin will also aid in healing and prevention.

Acne requires special attention in your daily skin care regimen and lifestyle. Let your esthetician support you in this journey to health through regular treatments and sound education.
LED therapy can help maintain healthy skin.

What is LED Therapy?

Carrie Patrick

LED therapy is a skin care treatment that uses light-emitting diodes (LEDs) of various colors, normally red, blue, and infrared, to maintain healthy skin. LEDs produce a low-powered glowing light, which is positioned to shine onto the face or other area being treated. No heat is produced by the LEDs, and it should not be confused with laser therapy.

The skin benefits of different colors of LED light have been identified through a broad array of studies. The most often cited study is the Whelan study, published in 2001 by NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center, which found that LED light helped speed up wound healing.

Red light is most often used for general skin improvement and to reduce the visible signs of aging. Blue light has been shown to destroy acne bacteria. Infrared light may have beneficial effects on the skin’s natural supply of collagen and elastin, which are responsible for maintaining skin firmness and resilience. A series of regular treatments will provide the best results.

What Can I Expect?

No special preparation is necessary. Simply arrive to your appointment on time, relax, and enjoy the treatment. Your skin care professional will cleanse your skin and may also apply a serum or other facial products to enhance the benefits of your session, depending on your goals and the range of treatments offered.

The LED device will be positioned on your skin, or up to a few inches away. Your eyes will be covered so that the light does not bother you. Relax and rest while the glow of the LEDs bathes your skin.

Typically, no sensation is felt. Some people may feel a slight tingling, or see flashes in their vision temporarily as a result of having a light source close to their face. Keeping your eyes closed and covered during the treatment will help avoid this.

Tips for an Even Complexion

Diminishing Freckles and Age Spots

While freckles tend to develop in people with fair skin, red or blonde hair, and blue or green eyes, age spots happen later in life regardless of skin type. But both are caused by an accumulation of melanin in the skin, the pigment that makes us tan. Both will also likely darken in the summer with sun exposure and fade in the winter months.

A Prevention Plan

The best way to avoid these unsightly spots is with a prevention plan. Use a sunscreen with at least a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 as a part of your daily skin care regimen, and wear protective clothing when outside. Age spots will concentrate on the backs of the hands, so be sure to apply sunscreen there, as well as your face.

When you do notice freckles or age spots gaining ground, the following options may be beneficial.

Lighten Naturally

Lemon juice is a natural lightener. Used twice a day, it will help fade age spots and freckles. Apply fresh lemon juice to skin with a cotton ball and allow it to dry before applying sunscreen and makeup.

Exfoliate

Human skin constantly sloughs old dead cells as new ones are produced. With aging, the skin tends to lose some of its ability to eliminate these skin cells. Alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) loosens the glue that holds old skin cells in place. When used regularly, AHA helps eliminate old cells and excess melanin. Many skin care products contain AHAs, but they can also be found in fruits and milk. Apply a mask of sour milk and allow it to dry before rinsing, or, for a more aromatic option, make a fruit mask of pureed ripe papaya. This fruit contains papain, an enzyme that helps dissolve dead skin cells.

Supplement with C

Taking a vitamin C supplement helps reduce skin’s sensitivity to the sun and can prevent melanin buildup.

Talk to a Skin Care Professional

Estheticians can provide products and treatments to help reduce or eliminate skin spots. Discuss your spots with a skin care professional to determine the best options for you.
Aug-Sept Promotions

$10 Off Advance Skincare Maintenance Package
Which includes but not limited to the following:
*Detox Deep Pore Facial Treatment   *Clarifying Mask
*Oxygenating Facial Treatment       *Purifying Mask
*Retinol Boosters                   *Pumpkin Enzyme Mask
*Triple Enzyme Mask                 *Papaya Mask and more!

5 Day Phyto Facial- Experience smoother, softer, brighter skin, loosen dead skin cells, hydrate and reduce fine lines, wrinkles and hyperpigmented skin. Includes 5 Rapidex unidose applicators for home use. Cost $95.00

5% Off Signature and Advanced Facials
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10% Off All Waxing Services

Schedule your appointment today! Services are scheduled by appointment only. Contact us at (847)987-SKIN(7546) or email us at: lsaesthetics@skincaretherapy.net

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