

[Acne and You]

[Finally, the Natural Way]

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Introduction

“Zut, a zit!”

Ever since she got back from France, she had grown accustomed to saying “zut” instead of “darn it.” But this time, you could feel the distress in her voice. It was prom day, and waking up that morning she felt that her face didn’t feel right. Her knee-jerk reaction was to look at her face in the mirror. There it was - a nasty growth protruding on her right cheek.

Up until she was twelve, her complexion was flawless. She knew it because her classmates told her so. She took it for granted that her skin would always be that way. But when she turned 13, things changed. While she experienced the usual bodily changes that girls her age go through, her complexion had been a constant source of frustration and embarrassment.

What happened to that beautiful skin she once had? It’s not like she moved to another country with a drastically different climate or suddenly gorged herself in chocolate and junk food. Why was she suddenly dealing with zits and other skin eruptions?

Boys and girls – even adults – agonize over unsightly skin. People say you shouldn’t judge a book by its cover. So we try not to judge people by their faces and complexions because it isn’t fair. But just because it isn’t fair doesn’t mean people don’t fall into that trap of judging. As a matter of fact, a face that’s riddled with serious acne makes us flinch. We ask ourselves, “doesn’t he know anything about skin care?” or “doesn’t she realize that her trips to the beach ruined her skin?” or else “he’ll never get a date, not with those ugly zits on his chin!”

It’s an irony really. Think about it. When we see someone with beautiful skin – whether in person or in fashion magazines – we look twice. Even if we know the photograph has undergone some air brushing and was produced using the best camera tricks, we still stare and admire. The same is true for bad skin. We also look twice at skin that’s ravaged by acne. It isn’t

pleasant for the person with acne, nor is it any pleasant for those who see someone with a bad case of acne.

Let's admit it. There's always something about skin - whether it's perfect or imperfect - that makes us stop and look twice.

One of our favourite stories concerns a famous dermatologist with a successful practice. He was interviewed for a magazine article a few years ago and one thing that struck us was what he said about how a few of his patients come to his office for consultation, always with a magazine that they wave in front of him.

"Doctor, this is the skin I want. Can you do it for me?"

The dermatologist has gotten used to it by now so he just smiles and shakes his head. Women expect him to weave a miracle. He almost sounds like a recording, he says, when

he tells them, "good skin is a gift from above. I can't duplicate that gift."

While good skin is something our parents can give us, we can't always choose our parents, can we? What if we inherit skin that's prone to acne?

How much do we know about it? Why is this skin condition causing emotional distress to millions of adolescents and adults, depriving them of the joys of a socially active and productive life?

This e-book will discuss the long and short of acne and hopefully increase your understanding of this problem. While acne can create an inferiority complex and make some people withdraw from society, it is not a life-threatening disease. It can be controlled.

"Surprisingly, it's often vanity that saves the day... While often perceived as a shallow trait, vanity is actually one of the greatest of human motivators – and no amount of teaching or preaching about health can quite compare with its transformative powers."

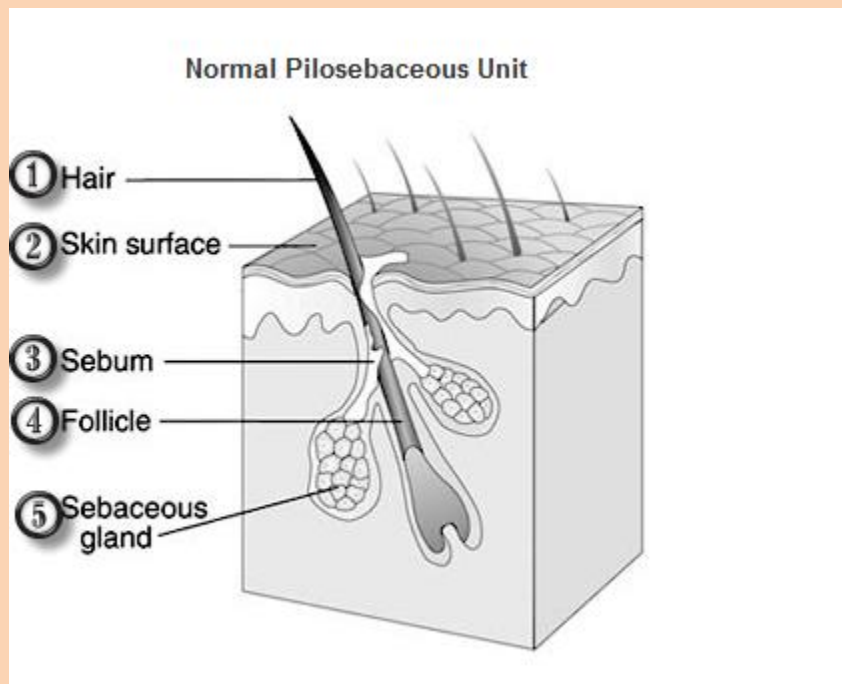
(Dr. Nicholas Perricone, Ageless Face, Ageless Mind, 2007)

We'll repeat: **acne can be controlled**. In many cases, it can be cured completely. That's key. If there's one thing we shouldn't do, it's to allow acne to control our lives or force us into emotional isolation.

Acne: the Truth

Let's first think "skin." To understand acne, we must understand human skin. It's not only our largest organ, but it's also the most fascinating and mysterious.

Truth # 1: The skin, unlike other organs, renews itself repeatedly and has vital functions.



(source: National Institutes of Health, US Department of Health and Human Services)

First, the title: what is a *pilosebaceous unit*? In medical lingo, acne is defined as a disease of the *pilosebaceous units (PSUs)*. The NIH says these PSUs are found in most parts of the body – face, upper back and chest. A PSU usually has a sebaceous gland which connects to a follicle. This follicle in turn contains fine strands of hair.

Looking at the numbered items in the diagram, we have:

- ① Hair – this includes the roots of the hair. When hair and sebum produce what the NIH calls a plug, it leads to the early development of acne.
- ② Skin surface – the skin has an upper layer and a lower layer. The upper layer lines the follicles and it undergoes a process called sloughing once every month or so. A problem occurs when the opening of the follicle is obstructed, or if the skin cells multiply too rapidly or too slowly and cannot exit from the follicle properly. The lower skin cells are “stuck” and can’t go anywhere. The follicle’s oxygen supply is also cut off.
- ③ Sebum – this is the oil produced by the sebaceous glands.
- ④ Follicle – see (1) above. When the follicle is plugged, bacteria known as *Propionibacterium acnes* which normally live on the skin surface grow in the plugged follicle.
- ⑤ Sebaceous gland – this is a gland that is located in the deeper layers of the skin that produce oil. When there is unusually high production oil in the sebaceous glands and the skin does not shed off properly, acne results.

Truth # 2: Acne appears as different lesions: microcomedo, open comedo (blackhead) and closed comedo (whitehead).

One thing that’s worth remembering is that when you spot a pimple, it did not appear on your skin overnight. It may have taken weeks, and even months to develop before it becomes visible. When a pimple appears, it may go away in a day or two, or it might “stick around” for a few more weeks and longer.

Doctors agree that all acne lesions begin the same way: from a clogged or plugged follicle. A microcomedo is a microscopic comedo (plural: *comedones*). All acne, no matter what type of lesion it is, begins as a microcomedo. When thousands of dead epidermal cells build up in the follicle, the size of the plug decreases, making the opening smaller. When the follicle swells up

because of the amount of oil coming from the sebaceous gland, some of this oil makes it to the surface of the skin while others are trapped inside. Tiny white bumps appear on the skin. At first they may not be visible, but if you look closer, you can see them if you pull your skin slightly.

These tiny white bumps you see are closed comedones - whiteheads. They're like the size of pin heads, and doctors say that they can cause a serious outbreak of acne.

An open comedo, on the other hand, is a blackhead. A blackhead occurs when oil and dead skin cells continue to accumulate. In this accumulation, one of two things can happen: either the oil makes its way to the surface of the skin, or it puts a lot of pressure on the linings of the follicle and then bursts like a balloon. When the pore opens, it produces a black head – an open comedo. The reason it is called a blackhead is because of the black dirt inside. The color of a blackhead varies from one person to another and depends on the amount of melanin each person has. That's the first of the two things that can happen.

"It's not known what causes the increased production of sebum that leads to acne. But a number of factors – including hormones, bacteria, certain medications and heredity – play a role."

(Mayo Clinic)

The second thing that can happen is actually worse: the follicle wall could explode. This is when acne begins. So when the follicle wall is damaged, dead cells, oil and bacteria invade the dermis causing inflammation, redness and swelling.

Aside from microcomedones and open/closed comedones, dermatologists mention other kinds of acne lesions: papules, nodules (large sized lesions located deep in the skin), pustules (pimples) and cysts. When a person has acne cysts, these are painful and can actually lead to permanent scarring. Papules, nodules and cysts fall under the classification of *inflammatory acne*.

For more information on acne lesions, you may want to visit <http://www.clearin-acne-treatment.com/Cause-of-Pimples-Blackheads-Whiteheads.htm> to find out about what causes acne.

Truth # 3: People have somehow clung to myths about acne. They're just that – myths.
There is no sufficient scientific evidence to support these myths.

When it comes to explaining *acne* to adolescents and some adults, it is necessary to separate fact from fiction, because having acne can tax a person's nerves and send him off to an emotional roller-coaster. The teenage years are a great time to meet new friends and start dating and be accepted by one's peers; being misinformed about acne is due to certain myths.

We'll take the **chocolate myth** first because that seems to be the most popular.

It's official: chocolate does **not** cause acne or make it worse. Even the most renowned doctors will insist – and can prove – that there is no direct link between chocolate and acne. A word of caution, however: even if there is no direct link between the two, you must still adhere to a healthy lifestyle that decreases the amount of sweets, salts and fat from your diet - <http://www.clearin-acne-treatment.com/Diet-Lifestyle-Acne.htm>. Ensure you consume foods that are rich in nutrients, especially vitamin A.

The trend these days is NOT to blame chocolates or French fries when you break out, because study after study has shown that eating plenty of these does not cause acne – generally. Because diet is a purely individual matter, the advice that doctors give to most of their patients



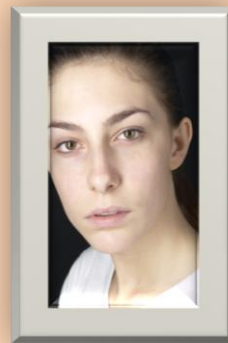
is to do an experiment. If they discover that their skin breaks out after eating chocolate, they must refrain from eating chocolate for a few days. When the pimple goes away, they should try eating chocolate again. If the pimple comes back, then chocolate is to be avoided altogether. If the pimple does not return, then the

culprit is obviously NOT chocolate. It's as simple as that.

Another myth is that acne is caused by dirt. This is a myth that is widely held but while it is certainly important to keep the skin always clean because oil and dirt can block pores, dirt does NOT bring about the clumping together of skin cells against the follicle wall. This phenomenon occurs very deep in the skin where cleaning won't reach it.

Third myth – acne is related to sexual activity. Some adolescents actually believe that once they're married or give birth to their first child, their acne will disappear. A variation of this myth is the other side of the argument: that an active sex life causes acne. This link was made only because adolescence is that period in a person's life when sex is of great concern. It may have been also propagated when people in the Victorian era said that masturbation causes severe acne. This particular myth became less popular in the 1940's when the medical community finally declared that sexual activity and acne are not related.

The fourth myth: geography, ethnicity and acne. Some people think that people who live in cold climates are less likely to get acne, while those who live in the tropics are more prone to it. There is no link between where one lives and the incidence of acne. Nor is the color of one's skin a precursor of acne, although it has been observed that dark-skinned people tend to have less severe acne compared to light-skinned individuals. Larger glands and more defined pores are common characteristics of dark skin, and these two attributes are known to protect against acne. Note though that hyper-pigmentation tends to occur more frequently with dark skin after acne is cured, so care must be taken to not irritate dark skin after a bout with acne.



Truth # 4: Boys who shave for the first time will get acne

When a boy reaches the age of puberty, one of the first signs is hair on the face, especially above the lip and on the chin. The hairs are at first sparse but over time, a beard and a moustache appear, making boys want to shave them. After the initial shave, the hair grows back, this time thicker. As the hair grows back after each shave, it grows thicker and is denser resulting in repetitive shaving. Frequent shaving can cause the skin to dry out, because as more hair grows, the shaving becomes more frequent and more forceful. Some of these hairs could turn inward and grow internally which can cause acne. The inside growth, combined with the production of oil in the sebaceous glands can result in frequent skin breakouts. The myth that shaving causes acne is indeed a myth, but it is true that shaving too often and too close to the hair follicles **may contribute** to the growth of acne.

Truth # 5: Applying sunscreen can cause acne.

This is false. People who get acne after applying sunscreen believe that it is the sunscreen itself causing the breakout; in fact, they could be reacting to an irritant contained in the sunscreen or developing a reaction to the sun. If this happens, it is best to avoid exposure to the irritant – whether it is the sun or to one of the ingredients in the sunscreen that is causing the reaction. Dermatologists say that it is not so much the sunscreen itself or its active ingredient, but the vehicle. A solution would be to switch brands or to try a different form. We recommend using an all natural sunscreen such as [Badger SPF 30 Sunscreen](#). Today's sunscreen products are manufactured with oil-free preparations. Given the number of sunscreen products on shelves, an acne patient can try any one of them to see which one works best. So to shatter the myth: sunscreen, per se, does not cause acne.

Acne Treatments

Medicine has made great strides in treating acne and other skin conditions. While severe cases of acne may take longer to cure and may require frequent experiments with various medications and methods until a suitable one is found, it goes without saying that these cures must be prescribed and supervised by a physician. People are strongly discouraged from self-medicating especially when they have a severe case of acne.

Let's look into some of the treatments used for acne. The kind of treatment will depend on the severity of the acne lesions. For example, a mild case of acne can be treated by benzoyl peroxide. Benzoyl peroxide can be

In 1982 when Accutane first came out, "it was the closest thing to a wonder drug for acne. But doctors knew it could cause some serious problems. Some of the side effects are lip and skin peeling, nosebleeds, nausea, headaches and blurred vision...A few patients taking Accutane develop liver abnormalities."

(Alvin, Virginia and Robert Silverstein, 1990)

obtained over-the-counter (Clearasil being the most common, although there are other brands in the market today) or by prescription (Persagel and others). Benzoyl peroxide gets to work on acne-aggravating bacteria that are on the surface of the skin. Side effects such as irritation or redness may occur.

Moderate to severe acne require a different kind of treatment which is more aggressive. This is probably the time when a visit to the dermatologist is warranted, or when the mild acne continues indefinitely.

In discussing various acne treatments, doctors recommend either benzoyl peroxide for milder cases or retinoids (vitamin A derivatives) which act directly on comedones (blackheads and whiteheads). Majority of acne patients receive retinoid treatment. Irritation and other forms of side effects are to be expected.

Then you have antibiotics – necessary for attacking bacteria on skin that aggravate the condition. Doctors will recommend antibiotics in combination with one or two other types of medication.

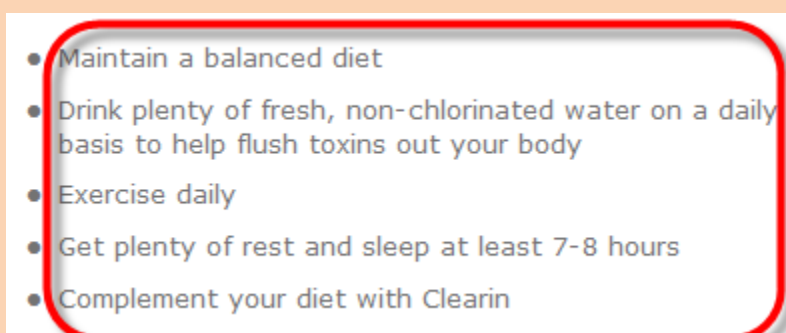
For severe cases of acne like cysts and nodules, patients are prescribed certain drugs like Accutane which is intended primarily to shrink the oil glands, but individuals who receive Accutane treatments are advised not to get pregnant for a whole year from the start of treatment and must also be monitored up to five months after treatment is terminated. There have been reports about Accutane causing serious skin irritation, elevated lipids and birth defects in the child (*Cleveland Clinic*).

Hormonal treatments are also available. They are recommended for adult women who show signs of androgen excess, have irregular menstrual periods or who have thinning hair. Types of hormonal treatments that are prescribed are birth control pills (with equal amounts of estrogen and progesterone in small doses) and corticosteroid pills. Like other treatments, people may experience side effects with hormonal treatments.

Ideally, because of potential side effects, none of the treatments above are 100% problem-free. Different people react differently to medications and have latent and active allergies that can be triggered by any one of the treatments just discussed.

Perhaps a good question is: what's the best way to avoid acne? But a better question would be: if acne is an inevitable part of life, what would be a proactive approach to manage it so we can significantly decrease our chances of getting it?

This helpful link describes steps you can take: <http://www.clearin-acne-treatment.com/Proactive-Acne-Treatment.htm>. When you go to this link, these recommendations will appear and are worth highlighting.

- 
- Maintain a balanced diet
 - Drink plenty of fresh, non-chlorinated water on a daily basis to help flush toxins out your body
 - Exercise daily
 - Get plenty of rest and sleep at least 7-8 hours
 - Complement your diet with Clearin

If you're not sure how to implement these lifestyle changes, there are professionals who can help. A nutritionist will teach you about a balanced diet and what foods are good sources of vitamins. Bright-colored fruits and vegetables are rich in nutrients and contain antioxidants that will help minimize the harm that environmental pollutants bring to your skin. Drinking water is a must and so is daily exercise. You can engage the services of a fitness trainer and discuss your goals as well as practice certain weight resistance movements that will burn fat, provide the cardio-vascular benefits, and tone your muscles.

If you look at the screen shot again on the previous page, the last step mentions Clearin. [Clearin](#) is a natural treatment for acne. On the next page, we'll discuss why choosing natural treatments are better for you and your skin.

Why Natural is Better

"I got hives under my eyes and now that the swelling has gone down, the skin under my eyes feels like a fine grain sand paper and it's wrinkled and dry and I look 15 years older. I'm so afraid it's permanently scarred, but it has only been a couple of days."

This sounds like a cry for help. It is. We stumbled upon this post online in a skin care site. The one who posted it was reporting an allergic reaction to a very popular commercial product – an overpriced line of products we might add – and contrary to what it and other commercial products claim that the answer to ageless skin is inside a bottle, this lady actually said the opposite. After using the product, she complained that she looked 15 years older.

The lady used a cosmetic brand that is sold in large department stores. It was just a make-up product, not medication. Imagine what it's like for people who go for acne medication containing strong chemicals that trigger unexplainable reactions. Natural treatments based on herbal formulations appear to be the safer route.

What about the trend among medical circles that favor natural treatments? Did you know that an increasing number of doctors now prefer to integrate a more holistic (natural) approach into their practice? On one Canadian site, we read that *"a physician has the right to utilize all responsible methods of treatment. The physician has the obligation, however, to determine the efficacy and safety of such procedures and to acquire the skills and training necessary for the delivery of such care."*

Given the high incidence of unpleasant side effects caused by traditional medications and invasive surgery, people would rather take the time to explore alternative medicine. Acne sufferers are no different. Since skin surgeons cannot guarantee 100% recovery from the more radical treatments or cannot assure patients that there will be NO side effects, the movement towards natural treatments has gained momentum.

“Back to basics” or “back to mother nature” seems to be the mantra in medicine these days, reason why herbal preparations have become the treatment of choice.

If the public can opt for an organic way of life, why can't they opt for organic treatments for their health problems? In order for a product to qualify for the organic label, it should not have been processed with synthetic materials or harmful chemicals.

We're not saying that Clearin is the only product that is chemical and toxin free. We're sure that there are other products that are made with the purest herbs. But Clearin stands out because it has at least four distinct ingredients that are known to be safe:

- *Aloe Vera* – packed with amino acids
- *Herba Lamnae* – helps rid the skin of toxic materials and boosts blood circulation
- *Dong Quai* – eliminates impurities and helps blood circulate in the dermis
- *Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae* – a natural substance that reinforces the body's immune system

“In 2001, the average American owned about five hundred dollars’ worth of cosmetic products, and this amount has surely risen dramatically as and more and more expensive product lines have been developed since that time. Do you really need to spend that much to get quality skin care? No.”
(Dr. Leslie Baumann, 2006)

Are you wondering what other ingredients are used to make Clearin? This link will take you to a more detailed list of natural ingredients: <http://www.clearin-acne-treatment.com/clearin-ingredients.htm>. If you scroll down the page, it also provides interesting information on homeopathics.

Homeopathic medicine rests on the principle of “like cures like.” This means that it uses treatments with extremely diluted portions. Homeopathics treat symptoms similarly and goes straight into the causes of the problem. Homeopathic medicine contains only natural

ingredients and hence produces no side effects. Today, there are over 3,000 cures that are based on homeopathy principles.

Even the American Medical Association (AMA), once known for its position against alternative medicine, is now promoting the idea that patients must be given the option to choose natural treatments. In fact the AMA's journals will be covering more topics on alternative medicine. Health and wellness are top concerns, and we have witnessed the trend towards curing our health problems with safer and more natural medicine.

To prove the point that natural treatments are preferred over prescription medicine, sales of herbal medicine alone have reached \$2.5 billion a year. The AMA says that doctors must keep up with that challenge and keep an open mind to the wishes of their patients. If patients want to discuss herbal treatments, they should not be too quick in criticizing this option. Evidence exists that millions of people have developed more trust and confidence in herbal preparations, essentially because of the **safety** factor.

The question of allergies triggered by prescription medicine is another reason why people prefer herbal treatments. While certain skin therapies may eliminate acne, there's always the possibility that the medication can cause mild to severe allergies. Earlier we mentioned Accutane as an effective treatment used by doctors but patients receiving this treatment must be supervised because of potentially serious consequences, particularly on the liver and on the unborn fetus.

Even the National Institutes of Health has a division that is devoted exclusively to research into alternative treatments. And the oldest scientific dermatology journal in the United States, the *Archives of Dermatology* once published a whole issue on alternative medicine. Dr. David J. Leffell is an American dermatologist. At the time we read his book back in 2000 (*Total Skin, Hyperion Press, 2000*) he was Professor of Dermatology and Surgery at Yale University's School of Medicine. This is what he said about herbal therapies:

“Dermatology is more interconnected with herbal remedies or treatments than any other field of medicine. Self-medication is easier and more products are readily accessible than when treating the internal organs. Many people experiment or embrace whatever they can to improve their skin, and this includes all that the health food store or alternative medicine shop may have to offer...It’s no wonder dermatologists must pay attention to the rise of complementary treatments.”

In discussing herbal treatments further, he says:

“In general, there is a much longer history of herbal therapeutics in Europe, and many well-established German companies have a reputation for the production of quality herbal remedies.”

Turning our attention now to antibiotics specifically for the treatment of acne, these once wonder drugs now cause some degree of apprehension. While the more common side effects of antibiotics are nausea and an upset stomach, other side effects are possible: yeast infections (for women), recurring headaches, and sensitivity to the sun. When taking antibiotics orally, an acne patient must not undergo isotretinoin treatment to avoid a condition known as *pseudotumor cerebri*. And since antibiotics are digested in the liver, patients must not take alcohol to avoid over-stressing the liver. It is also a generally accepted fact that people who take antibiotics frequently will, at a later time, no longer experience relief because the antibiotics are no longer working. There are also certain strains of bacteria that resist antibiotics.

Aloe Vera: the All-Purpose Plant



Herbal treatments for acne and other health

conditions contain aloe vera. We have not heard of anyone who has not tried it at least once.

Many natural treatments for skin problems

contain aloe vera as an active ingredient. We

know why:

- It has qualities that refresh and restore the firmness of the skin. It helps diminish scars, blemishes, liver spots and wrinkles.
- It helps in the treatment of pimples and other forms of skin inflammation.
- The aloe vera plant contains over 200 active substances like vitamins and minerals, proteins, amino acids and enzymes which not only work on the skin but also on the digestive system.
- There are absolutely no side effects that have been associated with aloe vera, although if you wish to ingest it (as in the form of a food or beverage with aloe vera extracts), consult your physician. Aloe vera is best applied topically; that is, on the surface of the skin.

Chemical Free Face Wash – A Natural Face Wash

One of the problems today is that most people are using a harsh, chemical based face wash. This actually irritates the skin and can dry out the skin, making it more susceptible to skin problems. By using a chemical free face wash such as [Fundamental Face Wash](#), you can be sure to gently clean your skin (it actually has ground apricot kernels for gentle exfoliation) and naturally moisturize it.

To learn more about Fundamental Face Wash, go [HERE](#). Acne problems? Go natural!

Conclusion

(Stress Tips for a Healthier Skin)

Adolescence is one of the greatest times of our life. Our social network expands and so do our responsibilities. Who says that only middle-aged people and seniors feel stressed out? Teenagers are just as stressed, if not more. Hormonal changes can wreck havoc on our skin and body. Because we lead hectic lives in and out of school, we could be missing out on the essential nutrients that we need for us to function at optimum levels. <http://www.clearin-acne-treatment.com/Stress-Hormonal-Changes-Acne.htm>.

To help you manage your stress, we'll provide a few tips – stress busters. By engaging in specific activities that promote a stress-free life, you will be doing your share to keep acne away.

- **Spend some alone to meditate or practice yoga** – we can't say enough about the benefits gained from regular meditation. Even 10 minutes a day will have a profound effect on our sense of well being. By learning to relax, we tend to fret less over our acne and instead focus on our treatment and the positive ways we can get rid of it. Discipline yourself to think that acne is a temporary phase and can be controlled with a healthy lifestyle. Some helpful exercises are neck stretches (tilt your head from left to right, and then forwards and backwards as you sit quietly) and forward stretches (stretch your body forward with your arms as far as you comfortably can. Hold that position for 30 seconds, close your eyes, and resume normal sitting position. Repeat).

- **Build up on your sleep bank!** - Sleep deprivation is not only bad for your overall health but also for your skin. Sleep tips include going to bed at the same hour consistently, treating your bedroom as a sacred place to sleep and rest, and not as a work center or entertainment hub.
- **An hour before going to bed,** do not undertake activities or carry on conversations that may provoke additional stress. Instead sit quietly with soothing music or a feel-good book.
- **Make your bedroom as comfortable as possible.** Having an air purifier also makes sense. If your sheets need to be changed more frequently because of medication you apply on your skin, do so. Clean sheets not only give you a warm comfy feeling, they make for better hygiene.
- **Many people suffer from insomnia.** If you are experiencing a bout of insomnia, do not toss or turn (or count sheep). Get up and do something that will occupy your attention. When you eventually feel tired, go back to bed. You may want to try a natural insomnia remedy such as [Power to Sleep](#).

“...stress has a whole raft of negative impacts on the body. In fact, it has been found to be a significant factor not only in all the diseases mentioned previously but also in the development of depression. And, amid all of these problems, as if they were not serious enough, stress also aggravates acne.”

(Dr. Terry J. Dubrow, 2003)

It has been said that efficient stress management is a rare gift, although people are now making sure that they are at least informed of the many ways they can combat stress. We'll offer the old-fashioned advice: reach out to people! Scientific studies have proven that people with good support systems (family, friends, community, school) are better equipped to deal with everyday stress. When you give and receive love for example, and make a habit of it, you feel tiny amounts of joy. Gradually, those tiny amounts become larger until the essence of joy itself becomes habit-forming.

It is impractical advice to say, “eliminate stress from your life” because stress IS part of life. No being on the planet is spared from stress. The best approach is to accept it. Once we accept it, we can manage it better. The first sign of acceptance is to view it as a positive force – a force that motivates us to action. By viewing it as a negative, we are immobilized and hence, helpless.

We’d like to share what Dr. Terry Dubrow suggested in her book *The Acne Cure* (Warner Books, 2003) when she discussed stress. The approach is to keep a tension diary. You need to keep at it for only a few weeks.

Take a piece of paper and divide it into three columns: the left column is for the hours of the day you are awake – include the hours you are unable to sleep), the middle column is for a description of the origin of your stress (examples would be: argument with mom, got a grade of C for my power point presentation, was short changed at the store, etc). The third column is for you to describe what kind of negative physical or emotional effects you felt from that stress event (e.g. headache, heavy perspiring, palpitations, tight muscles, etc). If you don’t have any major physical or emotional discomfort, leave the column blank.

Prepare a new sheet for each day. Dr. Dubrow says that over a few weeks, you will see two patterns recurring: one is that of repeating stressful behaviours and the second is a revelation of which stressful events are followed by negative reactions. Her point is that there will be certain events that you truly cannot avoid like holding training sessions in your office or visiting an aging parent in the facility. You can manage this type of stress by thinking that these activities are good for your professional career and giving you the chance to be with a loved one whenever you can. In your tension diary, you will also notice certain events that you CAN control and create a solution for. For



instance, if you were late for the train, you could re-set your alarm clock to get up 10 minutes earlier.

The tension diary suggested by Dr. Dubrow serves a useful purpose. This way, by jotting everything down related to your personal stress, you can detect a pattern and you'll have something to work with. It is pointless to go around feeling sorry for yourself and repeating to friends and family that "I'm stressed out" or "I can't deal with stress anymore." With a tension diary, you'll find the proof in the pudding.

Speak to your dermatologist. He or she will not only help you with your acne, but will also share bits of wisdom about the "other" factors related to acne and how you can stay on top of things.

[Click HERE to order Clearin](#), the All Natural Acne Treatment from VAXA.