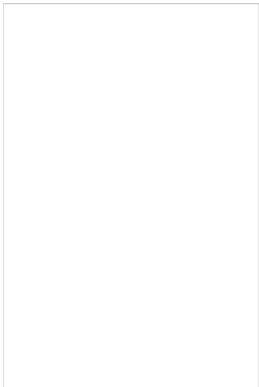


## 10 Acne Treatments for Teens



Pimples is a broad term to describe clogged pores. Your pore can get clogged from a combination of dead skin cells, sebum (oil), and bacteria. Non-inflammatory pimples, such as blackheads and whiteheads, are a combination of dead skin and oil, while inflammatory pimples have a bacterial component to it, causing cysts and nodules.

While pimples can occur at any age, teens and young adults are more likely to get acne breakouts, thanks to an influx of hormones. This can feel overwhelming during a stage of life when you're already experiencing a lot of changes.

First, it's important to know that you're not alone. According to the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, a whopping 80 percent of young people experience pimples and acne breakouts before the age of 30.

Also, teenage acne and pimples tends to subside as you get older, and keeping up with good skin care habits can help. We've got 10 ways to do just that.

### 1. Benzoyl peroxide and salicylic acid

Benzoyl peroxide and salicylic acid are the two most common over-the-counter pimple treatments. Salicylic acid is commonly found in body washes, face washes, and astringents. You can sometimes find it in moisturizers, too. The purpose of salicylic acid is to get rid of the dead skin cells that can lead to non-inflammatory pimples — again, these include whiteheads and blackheads.

On the other hand, benzoyl peroxide is a stronger treatment for more severe breakouts, including inflammatory acne lesions. Not only does it dry up dead skin cells, but it can also help fight excess sebum and kill pimple-causing bacteria, too.

For the occasional pimple cyst, nodule, or pustule, a spot-treatment containing 2 to 5 percent benzoyl peroxide can do the trick. If you have frequent, widespread inflammatory pimple breakouts though, you may consider using a face wash or a lotion with up to 10 percent benzoyl peroxide.

Since benzoyl peroxide is a strong ingredient, it can make your skin red and irritated at first. You may want to use these products once a day to start, and then gradually apply these cosmetics up to two times daily. Also, take care around clothing and colored hair, as dermatological cosmetics, containing benzoyl peroxide are known to stain.

### 2. Retinoids

Inflammatory pimples that are so common during your teen years may also be treated with retinoids. These are types of vitamin A derivatives that unplug clogged oil ducts to prevent pimples, cysts and nodules. Retinoids may be your next step if benzoyl peroxide doesn't do the trick with getting rid of pimples.

You'll need to see a dermatologist for retinoids for pimples, as dermatological cosmetics, containing this ingredient are available via prescription. Topical retinoids which you put directly on a pimple are the first choice. These dermatological cosmetics come in the form of gels and creams that you apply up to twice a day. You'll need to be extremely cautious with sun exposure, as vitamin A can increase your skin's sensitivity to UV rays.

Isotretinoin is a type of retinoid that comes in a pill you take every day. This is much stronger than topical retinoids, so your dermatologist will prescribe it as a last resort.

If you're female, your doctor may request a pregnancy test before prescribing isotretinoin, due to its severe fetal side effects. You may also need a consent form from your parents that acknowledges other possible side effects, including depression.

### **3. Topical and oral antibiotics**

Antibiotics can sometimes be helpful in occasional doses to help get rid of inflammatory pimples that are caused by the *P. acnes* bacterium. These can come in topical creams or gels that you apply for a certain number of days, as well as oral antibiotics.

It's important not to overuse oral antibiotics, or else your body can build up a resistance to them. See your dermatologist for advice on whether your current breakout warrants antibiotic treatment.

### **4. Don't pick your skin**

While you wait for your acne treatments to kick in, the waiting game can be frustrating. However, don't give into the temptation to pick your skin or pop your pimples. Doing so can stretch out your pores, leading to pock marks on your skin. You may even cause permanent scars, which could end up being just as noticeable as the original pimples themselves.

Finally, popping cysts and other deep pimples can cause bacteria to get pushed into the skin even further, inadvertently leading to even more pimples. As hard as it is, your best long-term approach is to be patient as your dermatological cosmetics do the work for you.

### **5. Use non-comedogenic products**

Non-comedogenic facial products and cosmetics are a must for acne-prone skin. These include face washes, moisturizers, and sunscreen, face cream with SPF, moisturisers as well as any cosmetics you might wear. The term "non-comedogenic" means that the products won't clog your pores — a product label will clearly state if this is the case.

### **6. Gently wash skin twice a day**

You know that washing your skin is important in your overall pimple care plan, but the frequency and technique is just as important.

Twice a day is ample. You may have to wash your face really quick in the middle of the day after gym class if you get sweaty, but overdoing it can dry out your skin and lead to more breakouts.

After washing your skin, pat your skin gently with a clean towel. Rubbing it will irritate your skin and any pimples you have.

Warm water is also most effective in cleansing your skin. Hot water is too drying, while very cold water doesn't do enough to help cleanse your skin properly.

## **7. Exfoliate once a week**

Aside from morning and night washes, weekly exfoliation can also help keep acne breakouts and pimples at bay. A mud mask is ideal for all types of pimples, as it helps unclog your pores and get rid of dead skin cells.

To get rid of pimples, you may also consider *gentle* exfoliating treatments containing salicylic acid or alpha-hydroxy acids for the same effect.

## **8. Wear sunscreen or face cream with SPF every day**

While you might feel wary about applying more products to your skin, sunscreen or face cream with SPF is an absolute must. Not only sunscreen and face cream with SPF help protect your skin from sun damage and cancer, but sunscreen or face cream with SPF may even help prevent pimples that's sometimes caused by sunburns.

It's especially important to wear sunscreen or face cream with SPF if you're using retinoids to treat your acne, as your skin will be more susceptible to burns.

## **9. Don't wear bandages or tight clothing**

It can be tempting to try to hide your pimples behind bandages or tight clothing. However, this can actually aggravate your pimples by further trapping oils and bacteria into your skin.

Loose, cotton clothing is your best bet for acne. It's also helpful to shower immediately after sports and other forms of exercise so you can keep your pores as clean as possible.

## **10. Change your diet**

A final consideration is your diet. Between school, extracurricular activities, work, and your social life, it can be challenging to eat right all the time. You may have also heard that foods don't cause acne. The truth is, though, that certain foods may *contribute* to pimple breakouts. The greatest culprits are dairy, high-glycemic foods, and processed items.

Drinking water may also play a part in maintaining acne-free skin: A 2015 study showed that increasing daily water intake can help keep skin hydrated so that you don't get an accumulation of dead skin cells.

## **Tips for parents**

If your teen is fighting severe acne, it's important to take their concerns seriously and offer all the support you can. Avoid shrugging off their concerns and telling them that everyone gets pimples, but instead let them know that you are there for them.

You can also help by reducing stress in your teen's life, as this can contribute to pimples, too. Also, look for signs of depression and let your teen meet with the dermatologist alone if they are more comfortable doing so.

## **Tips for teens**

Severe acne and pimples can feel isolating and affect your confidence. It's important to reach out to others who understand what you're going through, as you are certainly not alone. Aside from your parents and dermatologist, you can find others your own age via online support groups.

## **The bottom line**

Pimples are a normal part of life. This is especially true as a teenager, when you're dealing with hormonal fluctuations that can further trigger breakouts.

Still, pimples are treatable with the right skin care ingredients and routines. A dermatologist can also recommend stronger treatments if OTC methods fail to clear up stubborn breakouts.

If you're feeling sad or isolated over your pimples and acne, it's even more critical to reach out for support. Your parents, dermatologist, or online support groups are a good start. You might also consider talking to your parents about talk therapy with a mental health professional.

It's also important to remember that acne and pimples do tend to get better as you get older. When you have healthy skin care and lifestyle habits too, then you're off to an even clearer path in your future.

#acne #pimples #cosmetics #cream #face cream with SPF #sunscreen

<https://www.healthline.com/health/skin-disorders/acne-treatment-for-teens#takeaway>