

## How to get rid of acne on the back



Acne or pimples is a common condition that typically develops in areas of skin with a lot of oil-producing glands, such as the face, chest, and back.

Back acne, or “backne,” may involve blackheads, whiteheads, or pus-filled bumps called cysts.

The treatment for back acne and pimples depends on its severity and may involve over-the-counter products, dermatological cosmetics, prescription medications, or treatments such as light therapy.

In this article, we look at what back acne is, what causes it, and how to treat it.

### What is back acne?

Back acne refers to pimples or cysts on the back. It can involve:

- Blackheads: Each bump has a dark dot in its center.
- Whiteheads: Each bump has a white center.
- Papules: Each small bump has no distinct “head.”
- Cysts: These painful or tender lumps look similar to boils and are a severe form of pimples.

Back acne is not a distinct medical condition, but it has some unique challenges, compared to acne on the face. For example, it can be more difficult to see and reach pimples in order to apply treatments.

### Why does acne occur on the back?

Like the chest and face, the back has a high density of sebaceous glands. These produce sebum, a waxy substance that keeps the skin healthy.

Sebaceous glands are attached to hair follicles, or pores. If sebum or dead skin cells clog a pore, it can cause a blockage. This blockage may lead to inflammation or trap bacteria in the pore. This is how acne lesions and pimples develop.

A type of yeast, *Malassezia*, can also cause lesions and pimples that look similar to acne. The yeast tends to overgrow in humid, sweaty environments. Because the back is often covered by clothing, backpacks, slings, and other things, it can be an ideal environment for this microbe.

If the yeast gets into the hair follicles, it can cause a condition known as folliculitis. And if antibacterial treatments have not worked for back acne and pimples on the back, the person may have folliculitis instead.

### Getting rid of back acne

There are several ways to approach back acne, including:

**Over the counter and dermatological cosmetics treatment:** According to the American Academy of Dermatology Association (AAD), people with mild-to-moderate back acne and pimples may benefit from combining acne-friendly skin care with dermatological cosmetics together with OTC products that target the lesions and pimples.

A basic skin care routine for acne typically includes these cosmetics and products:

- **Cleanser:** wash the skin with a mild, nonirritating cleanser every day and after getting sweaty. Avoid harsh soaps and astringents, and do not scrub the acne — this increases the inflammation. When acne and pimples flare up, people can use a benzoyl peroxide wash. This ingredient kills bacteria and helps reduce lesions. It works best when a person leaves the wash on their skin for a few minutes before rinsing it away. Look for a concentration of around 5.3%, as higher amounts can cause irritation. A person may also need to reconsider shampoos and other hair products. If any of these are harsh, they may irritate the skin as they run down the back in the shower.
- **Medicated nonprescription creams and gels:** to reduce acne or pimples, a person might also try skin care products and dermatological cosmetics, for example, a face cream, that contains 0.1% retinoid, in addition to using a benzoyl peroxide face wash. Many over the counter creams contain retinoids. Another option is adapalene gel. Doctors recommend using this after showering and before going to sleep. An applicator can help a person apply treatments to difficult-to-reach parts of the back.
- **Moisturizer:** if the skin on the back feels dry or tight, particularly after showering or bathing, a person might use an oil-free cosmetic moisturizer. Look for products that are labeled “noncomedogenic.” This means that they do not clog pores.
- **Sunscreen:** sun exposure can make pimples and acne lesions darker and more noticeable. It can also cause them to last longer. Use a noncomedogenic sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or above whenever the back is exposed.
- **Prescription drug-based treatment:** if home care strategies and over the counter treatments or dermatological cosmetics do not help, and especially if acne is severe or the pimples are big, speak with a dermatologist. The doctor may prescribe stronger versions of retinoid or benzoyl peroxide products, or antibiotic creams. You may start using Oral contraceptives: when acne seems linked to the menstrual cycle, these may reduce the amount of oil that the skin produces. Oral antibiotics, such as doxycycline and erythromycin can reduce the amount of acne-causing bacteria on the skin. A dermatologist recommends the shortest possible dosage because overuse can lead to antibiotic resistance, and antibiotics can kill healthy bacteria in the gut.

**Isotretinoid:** this potent medication treats all four causes of acne: excessive oil, inflammation, clogged pores, and bacteria. It is extremely effective — around 85% of people who take it experience permanent clearing of acne and pimples after one course. However, it can cause severe side effects, such as suicidal thoughts, aggression, difficulty moving the limbs, and a serious skin rash.

The doctor may also recommend an Antiandrogen therapy. This involves taking medications that suppress testosterone. Dermatologists may consider it for females who do not respond to oral contraceptives or have polycystic ovary syndrome.

## Light and laser therapy

A dermatologist may recommend and perform laser or light therapy for pimples. This involves exposing the skin to a special type of light during regular sessions for a set period.

There are different types of light therapy:

- Red, blue, or infrared light therapy can treat pimples but not whiteheads, blackheads, cysts, or nodules.
- Photopneumatic therapy can help unclog pores — treating pimples, such as whiteheads and blackheads but not cysts.
- Photodynamic therapy can treat severe acne and big pimples very successfully, but it is more expensive.

At-home light therapy devices can treat pimples, but the light is less intense than the one a dermatologist uses. For lesions that leave noticeable scars, a dermatologist can use procedures such as laser treatments, microneedling, and chemical peels to reduce the appearance.

### **Prevention: Skin care**

The acne-friendly skin care routine for people with pimples, outlined by the AAD can help prevent back acne and pimples, as well as treat it. A gentle cleanser, noncomedogenic moisturizer, and adequate sunscreen may be all a person needs.

Other skin care strategies that can prevent or reduce acne, pimples and skin irritation include:

- regularly washing bed linens, towels, and pillowcases
- regularly washing clothes, particularly tight-fitting ones, such as bras
- avoiding things that rub against the back, such as backpacks
- exercising in loose-fitting clothes made from natural fibers, such as cotton
- showering and changing clothes immediately after exercise or using cleansing wipes
- washing workout clothes and equipment after each use

### **What can cause back acne?**

Acne affects many people. Certain factors that can contribute to or raise the risk of its development include:

- **Puberty:** teenagers often have acne and pimples, possibly due to the increase in testosterone that occurs during puberty. Testosterone plays a key role in stimulating the growth and development of the testicles and penis in males and maintaining bone and muscle strength in females. Experts believe that testosterone causes the sebaceous glands to overproduce sebum, increasing the likelihood of blocked pores. Acne may improve when the person enters adulthood.
- **Family history:** a person is more likely to develop acne if one or both parents have or had it. If both parents had pimples, a person may be more likely to develop acne at an early age. And if a person's parents had acne as adults, the person may also be more likely to have pimples during adulthood.
- **Sex:** females are more likely than males to have acne, possibly due to the influence of female sex hormones, which fluctuate during the menstrual cycle, pregnancy, and menopause. In addition, polycystic ovary syndrome, which affects females and causes high levels of testosterone, can lead to oily skin and the appearance of pimples, among other symptoms.

Other factors that may cause acne or trigger pimple outbreaks include:

- Certain medications, such as steroids and some forms of hormonal birth control

- Cosmetic products that are not noncomedogenic
- Regularly wearing items, such as backpacks, that rub or irritate affected areas of the skin
- There is also some evidence that dietary factors can worsen or improve acne. According to the AAD, some studies have shown that a low glycemic index diet reduces pimples.
- Also, some studies have found an association between cow's milk bigger amount of pimples on the body. However, the link is unclear, and there is no evidence that other dairy products, such as yogurt or cheese, cause acne.

## Summary

Back acne, or backne, pimples occurs when dead skin cells and oil from the sebaceous glands block pores, causing inflammation. It can be harder to see and reach acne and pimples on the back in order to treat it. However, a range of effective over the counter and prescription treatments, or dermatological cosmetics are available, and using an applicator can help.

To prevent acne and help reduce it, a person should adopt a regular, gentle skin care routine. It is also a good idea to change out of sweaty clothing, change bedsheets regularly, and avoid harsh soaps and other harsh products that touch the skin.

In addition, back acne and pimples can worsen if a person regularly wears things that rub against it, such as a backpack.

Speak with a dermatologist about severe or persistent acne and big pimples. Some acne-like lesions result from different health issues, which require different treatments.

#Pimples #Acne #Cosmetics #Sunscreen

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