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**Acne**

Most teens have acne at some point in their life. While there is no cure for acne, it usually resolves as you get older. Try not to get discouraged; there are a lot of treatment options to help you keep acne under control. It is important to remember that you must allow each treatment the appropriate time to work. Although acne can be frustrating, having patience is important; some treatments take 3-6 weeks or longer before results are visible. Be consistent in your treatment regimen and remember: we are here to help! Call the office to schedule an acne consult or obtain information on local dermatologists.

**General Advice:**

* Gently wash the affected areas by hand with a plain soap with no perfumes or other additives
* Avoid scrubbing sponges, astringent cleansers, or washcloths that may irritate your skin
* Pat affected area dry with towel
* Was no more than twice a day
* Try not to squeeze, pick, or break pimples
* If you experience burning or irritation of your skin, try a non-comedogenic moisturizer – apply after your acne medication
* Follow your doctor’s instructions closely as to when and how to apply topical medications
* Ask your doctor how to take prescribed oral medication:
  + Should I avoid milk when taking this medication?
  + Should I take it with plenty of water?
  + Should I take it on an empty or full stomach?
  + Should I watch out for sun sensitivity?
* Always check you prescriptions before leaving the pharmacy – creams, gels, solutions, or ointments should not be substituted for one another without physician approval

**Treatment Options:**

1. *Benzoyl peroxide*
   * Most effective non-prescription acne treatment
   * Kills bacteria, unplugs oil ducts, and heals pimples
   * Strength varies (2.5-10%)
   * Available in wash, lotion or gel form – try wash or lotion first, gel is more irritating
   * How to use:
     + Try 5% wash or lotion once per day for one week
     + After one week, try using twice a day (morning and night) if your skin is not red or peeling
     + If acne does not improve after 4-6 weeks, try 10% lotion or gel – use it once per day at first, then twice a day if it doesn’t irritate your skin
     + Remember: apply a thin layer over your entire face (avoiding the skin around the eyes), do not just dab on top of pimples!
   * If benzoyl peroxide does not help, please call the office to schedule an acne consult
   * You made need a prescription medication
2. *Retinoid* (Retin A, Differin)
   * Office visit required for prescription
   * Use exactly as directed
   * Try to stay out of the sun while taking this medications
   * May cause skin to peel or turn red
3. *Oral antibiotics*
   * Office visit required for prescription
   * Used for inflammatory acne
   * May be used alone or in conjunction with topical medication
   * Please allow 6 weeks for medication to work properly
4. *Isotretinoin* (i.e. Accutane, Amnesteem, Sotret, or Claravis)
   * Treatment is prescribed and carefully supervised by dermatologist
   * Very strong medication taken as a pill
   * Used for severe acne that hasn’t responded adequately to other treatments
   * Will require pregnancy test, blood work and signed consent before beginning