

Undoubtedly, one of the most embarrassing things that an individual faces at least once in their life is acne or pimples. It's a nightmare for brides to be, or one who's long cherished party is at the doorstep. I have been suffering from this embarrassing condition and its after effects, and hence thought of writing about it.

Acne is one of the most common skin conditions, affecting millions of individuals worldwide. Leaving the statistics aside, I can vow to the fact that, though it typically develops in teenagers, adults too suffer it to some extent.

Acne usually affects the face, but may also affect the back, neck and chest, where the sebaceous glands are most prominent. Its severity may range from mild to severe. Untreated acne usually lasts about 4-5 years before cooling down. However, it can last for many years in some cases.

WHAT'S THAT ON MY FACE?

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Causes-

Though the exact cause of acne is still unknown, but there are some triggering factors-

- Hormonal changes is the prime cause, hence it is related to puberty, menstrual periods, pregnancy, OCP (oral contraceptive pills) or stress
- Oily cosmetic and hair products
- Diets that are spicy, oily or use highly refined sugar can trigger acne formation
- Humidity or exposure to dirt
- Use of certain drugs like phenytoin, isoniazid, steroids, etc



Treatment of Acne-

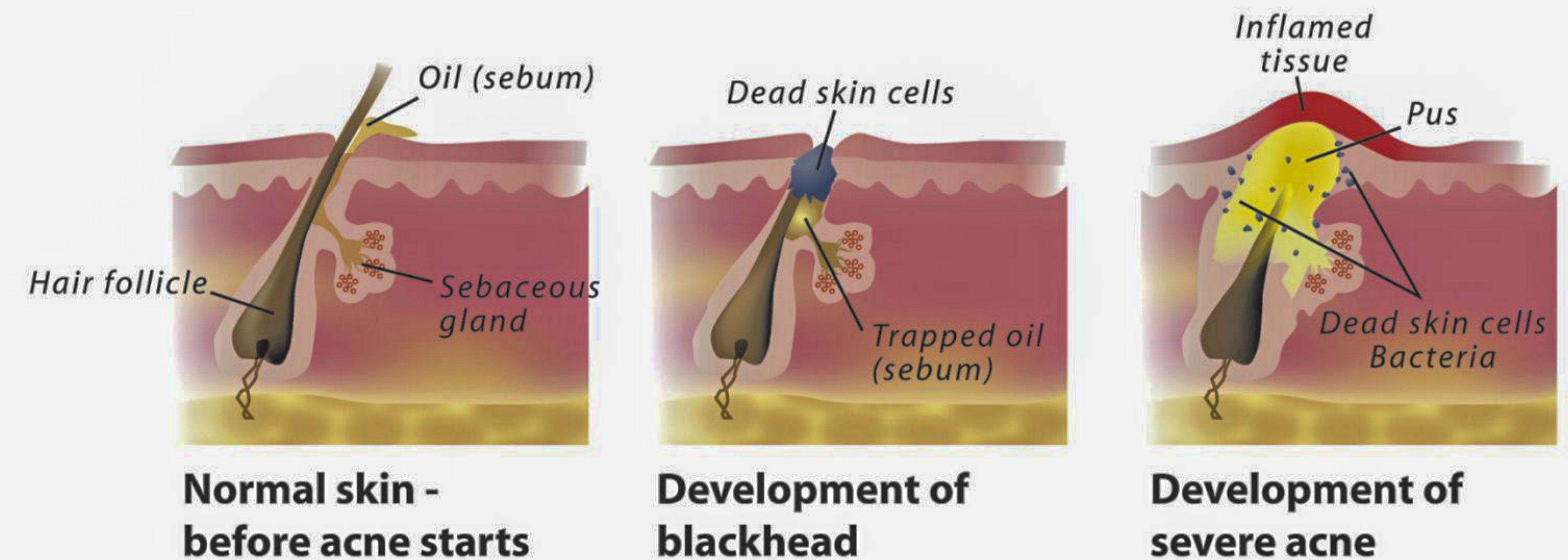
There are various treatments and medications available for acne, but the procedure selected solely depends on the severity of the acne. Doctors may prescribe the following drugs all at once or at different stages, depending on the patient's condition and skin type. Acne is something that should not be neglected, as undoubtedly early treatment will show best results.

it completely. Once you mature and the hormonal balance restores, acnes will fade off eventually.

What Can be Done at Home?

Though, they cannot totally stop recurring of acne, these home remedies can prevent it to some extent:

- Washing and keeping your face clean regularly
- Trying to avoid touching the skin or pimples
- Avoiding the sun



- Oral antibiotics- Tetracycline (strictly prohibited in children below 12 years and pregnant women), doxycycline, amoxicillin, etc
 - Tropical antibiotics- Erythromycin or Clindamycin lotion
 - Tropical Medications- Benzoyl peroxide, salicylic acid, retinoic acid (Retin-A)
 - Pills such as Spironolactone or OCP- in women, if cause is hormonal
 - A strong medication- Isotretinoin- which in one sense is the final oral treatment and should be closely monitored when prescribed
- Minor surgical procedure, such as dermabrasion and chemical peels can also help. But these are recommended for scars, only after the pimples have stopped erupting.

When can one see results?

Treatment takes about four to six weeks to show its effect. In some cases, it may take months. Hence it is necessary to be patient and continue treatment. There's a high possibility that the acne may return once the treatment is over or discontinued. Be patient as the primary goal of the treatment is to minimize the effects of acne, rather than eradicating

Myth Busters

The following are some myths, prevailing among patients as well as their parents-

- Squeezing pimples - this is an extremely bad idea. Squeezing them will cause further inflammation and infection.
- Acne goes away on its own - this is a complete lie. At least from my point of view. I was reluctant to try acne treatment and hence am now suffering from scars. I won't say that acne does not go away on its own, its just that, it completely depends on the type of acne you have.
- The more medications you use, the better it is for your acne - That's not always the case. You should obviously try to keep your skin clean and fresh but some people wash their face aggressively, using multiple medicines or herbs, which leads to irritated skin. Just washing the face once or twice in the day, preferably before going to bed and after waking up, is enough to keep the skin clean.

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