

Acne is a common chronic skin condition caused by inflammation of oil-producing sebaceous glands. When acne occurs the hair, oil and cells that line the follicle form a plug that does not allow sebum to flow to the surface. These plugs allow bacteria that normally live on the skin's surface to grow in the plugged follicle. The presence of bacteria in the follicle results in inflammation, seen as redness, pain, swelling and heat. Acne is seen as enlarged plugged follicles, whitehead, blackhead, pustules, cysts and nodules.

While the exact cause of acne is not known, we can identify trigger factors that exacerbate it. Genetics, stress, hormones, menstruation, pregnancy, starting and stopping birth control pills, hot climates, greasy cosmetics, grease from the work environment, pollution, and some medications can increase the likelihood of acne. Pressure on the skin from athletic equipment and backpacks can worsen acne. Picking and squeezing, pushes the blemishes from the surface and into the follicle, which contributes, to further problems. Soap and some cleansers are very alkaline and create an alkaline state on the skin, in addition to stripping the barrier of the epidermis, leaving it vulnerable to irritation and breakouts.

There are many myths associated with acne causes, dirty skin, chocolate and perspiration.

A comprehensive approach is needed to regenerate the skin cells to reveal brighter, clearer and more evenly toned skin.