

Acne:

Acne is a skin condition which affects many people throughout their lives. Acne skin often develops and is at its worst in the teens but adult onset acne is getting more prevalent and can be deeply upsetting.

There are two main causes of acne: hormones and stress. With the onset of puberty there is an accompanying increase in the production of testosterone, a male hormone which is produced by both men and women. Acne is caused when the skin has an abnormal reaction to this testosterone.

Acne problems are characterised by blackheads, whiteheads, yellow pus-filled spots and redness caused by inflammation, some of which will form painful cysts that can cause scarring if left untreated.

If you are an acne skin sufferer, be very gentle with your skin, many people with acne problems develop sensitivity by over exfoliating it or by using harsh products in an attempt to eradicate oiliness. Stripping the skin can aggravate it further, often triggering increased levels of sebum which may make acne problems and spots worse.

When asked for an acne treatment, we recommend dealing with acne problems using gentle foaming washes, toners which balance and naturally purify the skin and light formulation moisturisers which do not block pores and ease inflammation.

Your GP or dermatologist may prescribe topical retinoids for mild to moderate cases, with the aim of 'unplugging' pores and preventing bacteria from forming.

It's also common sense that a healthy, well-balanced diet benefits us all, inside and out. Eating lots of fresh fruit and vegetables every day will provide you with the vitamins needed for healthy skin.

Eczema:

Eczema is a condition that can be found all over the body but eczema skin problems mostly affect the face, inside elbows and behind the knees. Most prevalent during childhood and puberty it can decrease with age, but may flare up in susceptible people throughout their life time.

Although nothing "cures" eczema we believe the best natural eczema treatment is a gentle, effective skincare routine which is the first stage in minimising the discomfort of eczema.

Bathe and wash using a mild, non-drying body wash and use an emollient eczema cream, lotion or balm frequently throughout the day; this not only keeps eczema skin soft and supple, but also helps to disguise the appearance of flaking skin and can reduce severe chapping.

With the correct treatment and management, the physical effects of eczema can be greatly reduced. A combined internal and external approach can work well, so attention should be paid to diet and supplementation as well as topical treatments.

As with any skin condition, a good place to begin is by trying to avoid potential irritants and improving your diet. Adding natural essential fatty acids to your diet such as evening primrose oil and borage oil has been shown to help many eczema sufferers.

Psoriasis:

Like eczema psoriasis is a very common condition; it is caused when skin cells reproduce too quickly. Usually skin renews itself every 28 days but psoriasis skin sufferers have a much faster turnover of skin cells - around every six days.

The condition is characterised by red, scaly, patches of sensitive skin known as 'plaques'. These patches, which vary in size, can fall off, often leaving small areas of skin bleeding, raw and sometimes itchy.

The psoriasis skin condition is very distressing for sufferers and can be hard to treat; diet and lifestyle have a huge part to play. As skin is very porous it is vital to choose psoriasis skin care that is as gentle and pure as possible to minimise irritation and try to improve the skin's condition.

Bathe and wash using a mild, non-drying body wash and use an emollient lotion or balm frequently throughout the day; this not only keeps skin soft and supple, but also helps to disguise the appearance of flaking psoriasis skin and protects the skin.

For some, psoriasis will simply disappear on its own. For the remainder of sufferers the good news is that treatments have vastly improved in the past few years and more help is therefore available to help slow down the rate of skin cell formation and ease some of the discomfort.

The most popular treatments include emollients, vitamin D based creams, coal tar preparations, steroid ointments or creams and phytotherapy (UV light therapy).

As psoriasis has also been linked to problems with the metabolism of essential fatty acids (EFAs), dietary changes and nutritional supplements can also help significantly.

Acne Rosacea:

Acne rosacea is a long-term, non-contagious skin disorder, symptoms vary but heat, redness, flushing and blushing are common rosacea skin symptoms. Skin can look bumpy with tiny red spots under the skin and small broken blood vessels specifically over the cheeks.

The acne rosacea skin condition is often made worse by spicy foods, stress, hormones, sun, wind and alcohol consumption.

A diagnosis from your doctor is important so that the correct rosacea treatment programme, comprising both products and lifestyle changes can be followed.

The acne rosacea skin condition should not be confused with acne as the causes and treatments are quite different.

Because skin can become extra sensitive, rosacea treatment needs to be very gentle, use cream cleansers not foaming washes, a gentle floral toner to cool and a light but cooling moisturiser to hydrate the skin.