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Zap Your Zits Using Natural Methods

Presented by: **Total Health Systems** TotalHealthSystems.com

Introduction

Acne vulgaris, or simply acne, affects 40 to 50 million Americans and almost 85 percent of all people develop acne at some point in their lives, states the American Academy of Dermatology.[1] Many observers note that acne is a disease of Western civilization, that it is rare in indigenous cultures (except in those individuals or groups who adopt Western dietary and lifestyle habits).[2] Acne is an often distressing and persistent health problem, especially among teens. Acne lesions most commonly appear on the face, neck, chest, back, and shoulders, and can cause significant emotional distress and skin scarring.

Conventional approaches to acne treatment vary considerably from more natural methods. In this edition of the Wellness News Network, we will examine the factors that lead to acne and discuss several powerful natural methods of resolving this health problem. Ask your chiropractor about his or her thoughts on this health topic before making any treatment decisions about your - or your child's - acne.

Important Factors to Consider

When it comes to acne and its underlying causes, there are 3 important factors to consider: bacteria, sebum, and terrain. Let's take a closer look at each of these factors:

• **Bacteria:** Bacteria, specifically *Propionibacterium acnes*, is linked to the skin condition acne. In people with acne, this bacteria generates byproducts that weaken the cell walls of follicles and cause inflammation.

• **Sebum:** Sebum is the oily and waxy product of sebaceous glands, which are primarily located on the scalp and face. Sebum helps lubricate and waterproof the skin and hair. P. acnes proliferates in sebum, altering the skin and forming plugs, called comedones. The sebum produced in people with acne is of poor quality, and P. acnes bacteria living off this poor quality sebum generate further acne-inducing byproducts.

• **Terrain:** Terrain refers to the skin itself, specifically the health of the skin and the factors that influence the development of skin diseases. Improper diet (more on this later) can start a cascade of events that narrow the sebum canal and pores leading to acne.

What Are Conventional Therapies?

The conventional medical treatment of acne attempts to inhibit sebum production, kill bacteria, reduce

QUESTION:
Controlling acne by fasting can....

A) help identify food sensitivities
B) inhibit production of sebum
C) help avoid foods that trigger acne
D) all of the above

ANSWER:
A) and C)

TRUE OR FALSE:
Botanical medicines have recently beenn found to control acne

ANSWER:
False – they have been used for many years

Finish this sentence...

Acne is more prevalent in.....
A) Western dietary cultures
B) Eastern dietary cultures
C) any dietary culture

ANSWER:
A) Western dietary cultures

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inflammation and boost skin cell turnover, notes the Mayo Clinic.[3] Some of the most common conventional acne therapies include the following: over-the-counter topical treatments, prescription topical treatments, antibiotics, oral contraceptives (in women) and other prescription medications.

Listed below are several of the most potent *natural* treatment methods. Natural approaches are designed to encourage healthy bacteria (in both the skin and colon), promote healthy sebum production and reduce inflammation.

Natural Method #1: Fasting

Fasting can be an extremely helpful natural approach to acne. A fast presents an opportunity to reduce dependence on addictive substances (sugar, caffeine, nicotine) and step away from foods that can aggravate or worsen acne, such as chocolate, cola, coffee, nuts, milk products and greasy or salty foods. Dairy products and carbohydrate-rich foods (bread, bagels, chips), notes the Mayo Clinic, may be particularly likely to trigger acne.[4] Therapeutic fasting plays an important role in decreasing the burden of acne-inducing foods on your body and optimizing wellness, and it can be helpful for treating and preventing acne, especially when it is combined with a well-rounded treatment plan that targets acne's fundamental cause. Fasting can also be an excellent way to identify food sensitivities..

Natural Method #2: Eliminating Refined Sugar From Your Diet

If you change only one aspect of your diet to help treat your acne, let it be the elimination of refined sugar. According to a 2007 study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, a low-glycemic-load diet improved acne lesions in young males.[5] Another study, published in 2008 in the journal *Molecular Nutrition & Food Research*, states that diets with a high glycemic load may aggravate some of the factors (such as sex hormones and insulin growth factors) associated with acne development.6 A further study, still, published in 2009 in the *International Journal of Dermatology*, reports that the hormonal effects of certain dietary components, including glycemic index levels, can control the effect of diet on acne risk.[7]

Natural Method #3: Botanical Medicines

Botanical medicines have long been used to help control or eliminate acne. Botanical medicines can have strong effects on the body and should always be used with caution (and only under the supervision of your chiropractor or other healthcare professional). Botanical medicines that have historically been used *topically* to help treat acne include tea tree oil, azelaic acid and Calendula succus. Botanical medicines that have historically been used *internally* to help treat acne include chastetree (for hormone imbalances), gugulipid, Oregon grape, usnea, and gumweed.

Considerations

Speak with your chiropractor before using any therapeutic approach to help treat your acne. Your chiropractor can instruct you on the safest and most effective way to use natural approaches to help resolve your acne, as well as suggest other treatment approaches that may be more appropriate for your specific health circumstances.

Quote to Inspire

"For many the cure to acne is at the end of their fork, not in a prescription pad."

Mark E. Hyman

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