

Study Finds Doctors Overuse Antibiotics for Acne Treatment

Acne or acne vulgaris is a long-term skin disease that occurs when hair follicles become clogged by dead skin cells and oil. Acne is the common cause for spots and it usually affects the face but sometimes may also affect the back, neck, and chest. Characterized by blackheads, whiteheads, pimples, and greasy skin; the resulting appearance can lead to anxiety, reduced self-esteem, and in extreme cases, depression.

Causes of Acne

Acne usually occurs when oil glands attached to the hair follicles are stimulated during puberty due to hormonal changes. However, there are cases when acne is stimulated by the following factors:

- **Hormones:** Adult hormonal activity also contributes to the formation of acne. Acne developed between the age of 21 and 25, though uncommon, is usually linked to follicular glands that grow larger and make more sebum.
- **Genetics:** Genetic components play an important role in acne formation. It is believed that there are multiple candidates for genes related to acne.
- **Diet:** The relationship between diet and acne is unclear, but high-glycemic-load diets have been found to have an effect on its severity.
- **Smoking:** Smoking increases the risk of developing acne and it worsens it if the person increases the number of cigarettes per day.
- **Psychological:** A few high-quality studies have demonstrated that stress causes and worsens acne.

Acne Treatment

As per recent research done by NYU Langone Medical Center, physicians who treat acne prescribe ineffective antibiotics and leave patients on the medication for too long. According to Seth Orlow, the study's senior investigator, physicians need to recognize within weeks, not months, the need to change medications in cases of severe acne. The study mainly focuses on the overuse of antibiotics in cases of acne. As per the published findings, doctors kept patients on antibiotics for an average 11 months before switching to isotretinoin (former brand name Acutance), a stronger treatment. As per Orlow, the doctors should limit the use of antibiotics to a maximum two to three months each, or a cumulative total of no more than six months, and then only if significant improvements are seen.

Complacent About Overuse of Antibiotics

As per the research, the doctors and patients have become complacent to antibiotic overuse and the subsequent danger of microbial drug resistance. The main reason for late prescription of isotretinoin is the side effect linked with the medicine. Sold with a federal restriction, the side effect includes the risk of birth defects and some potential threats like causing depression. It is also recommended to use isotretinoin only when acne therapy has failed.

Nevertheless, the federal restriction is designed to work as a protocol to prevent and carefully manage the risk related with isotretinoin. It does not mean that patients suffering with severe acne must be left on prolonged use of antibiotics, even when they are not helping. It is important to find a better balance between trying antibiotics that may work and getting isotretinoin quickly to patients for whom antibiotics are not

working.

Finding balance will not only help to decrease the number of cases of acne found in young people, quick healing will help boost their confidence.

Recommended Reading:

- *Healthy Skin*
- *Get Naturally Gorgeous Skin with These 4 Home Remedies*
- *Natural Remedies for Acne*
- *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases*
- *The Power of Our Hormones and How To Balance Them*