

*focus on*  
**FLAWLESS**  
*conquer with*  
**CLARITY+**



**Q: Can stress lead to breakouts?**

**A:** Stress can exacerbate breakouts. When you are stressed, the adrenal gland releases cortisol, a stress hormone. When cortisol is released into the body, a small amount of the male hormone, testosterone, is released at the same time. Testosterone is responsible for the sebaceous glands producing excess sebum in both men and women, which often results in breakouts and problematic skin.

**Q: Will squeezing spots make them go away?**

**A:** No. Although it may be tempting to squeeze your pimples, you risk spreading the bacteria that causes blemishes, which will result in even more pimples. Left alone, a pimple will typically heal itself within 3 to 7 days, whereas attempting to pop the pimple may break the skin and will increase the time it takes to heal. What's more, squeezing spots incorrectly could lead to unsightly red marks and may even result in scarring. If you're tempted to pop a pimple, rather visit a trusted Skin Care Professional!

**Q: Will tanning or sun exposure help to get rid of breakouts?**

**A:** Contrary to popular belief, tanning will not help to heal your breakout - in fact, it may end up making it worse! While it's true that the sun may help to dry out your spots, this could end up triggering more oil production, which may result in even more spots.

**Q: I've heard that applying a dab of toothpaste to a spot will help dry it out. Is this true?**

**A:** Although toothpaste applied to individual spots may help to dry them out, it will also cause skin irritation and could potentially lead to even more breakouts. Using a targeted spot treatment gel that contains Tea Tree Oil and vitamin B3, like Environ's Focus Care Clarity+® Sebu-Spot Blemish Gel, is a safer option that will have better results.

**Q: Is it true that oilier skin types should avoid using oils on their skin?**

**A:** It may sound counter-intuitive, but oils are vital in the treatment of breakouts and problematic skin. Many sufferers resort to using harsh products that strip and dry out the skin in an effort to combat breakouts, but these only make things worse. The sudden reduction in oils means that your skin overcompensates by producing more sebum, which leads to even more breakouts. Many facial oils contain anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, and soothing compounds that are actually good for the skin and help to hydrate, heal, and protect the look of inflamed, breakout-prone skin.

**Q: Will scrubbing my skin help to clear up breakouts?**

**A:** Many people who suffer from regular breakouts mistakenly think that scrubbing their skin with a facecloth or rough exfoliant (think crushed apricot seeds, or sugar or salt scrubs) will help treat the breakouts and result in a smoother skin. The truth is that using harsh, granular scrubs and over-exfoliating will only make things worse by spreading bacteria and causing further inflammation. Opt for a chemical exfoliant that makes use of Alpha Hydroxy Acids instead, and go for regular Professional Skin Peels.

**Q: Does taking the contraceptive pill help to balance hormones and therefore prevent breakouts?**

**A:** Male hormones, called androgens, are responsible for the production of the excess sebum that causes pimples. Many birth control pills contain oestrogen and progesterone, and helps to lower the amount of androgens in your body, thereby resulting in a lowered risk of breakouts.

**Q: Does wearing makeup worsen acne?**

**A:** When you're experiencing a breakout, you may be tempted to wear more makeup in an attempt to cover the appearance of spots. Unfortunately, many of the ingredients contained in makeup (such as heavy silicones, for example) actually clog your pores and will only worsen existing problematic skin. If you're set on wearing makeup, opt for mineral makeup instead. Mineral makeup doesn't contain fragrances, talc, preservatives, or other harsh chemicals, so it's better suited to sensitive and blemish-prone skin types. It's also important that you ensure that you remove every last trace of your makeup at the end of each day to help prevent clogged pores.

**Q: Is it true that drinking fizzy drinks and eating sugary foods will cause acne?**

**A:** While some people believe that drinking fizzy drinks and eating lots of sugary foods, like sweets and chocolate, may cause breakouts, scientists have found no clear link between diet and the incidence of breakouts. That said, foods that contain refined sugar cause spikes in your body's insulin levels, which could exacerbate inflammation, increase the production of sebum, and may even contribute to the clogging of pores - all contributing to your overall skin health. Opt for a diet that's rich in vitamin A and antioxidants by including more leafy greens, carrots, pumpkin, eggs, and liver into your meal plan.

**Q: Will drinking more water help prevent acne?**

**A:** Although drinking more water isn't a cure for problematic skin, upping your intake of water may help to keep your skin clearer and can speed up the healing process, as skin cells need water to function properly. Ensuring that your skin is properly hydrated also helps to minimize the production of excess sebum, which reduces the chances of experiencing a breakout.

**Q: Why do breakouts occur more frequently just before menstruation?**

**A:** If you experience a regular bout of particularly stubborn breakouts around that time of the month, your hormones are to blame. About a week or two before the start of menstruation, the levels of male hormones in your body start to rise, which results in an increase in the production of sebum and leads to oilier skin, more breakouts, and even an oilier scalp and hair. Ensure that you are following a targeted skincare routine, eating a diet that's rich in vitamin A, and drinking plenty of water to help minimize the effects of these hormonal fluctuations.



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