

## **Acne Treatments**

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For general info there is a good PIL on Mentor.

### **Topical Treatments**

#### **Benzoyl peroxide**

Good for comedones and infected lesions.

BP comes in different strengths (2.5-10%), available otc and works best if skin is washed beforehand. Wash off after several hours. Increase to stronger solution and bd as tolerated.

#### **Topical retinoids**

Again good at unblocking pores, some effect at reducing inflammation. Include adapalene, tretinoin and isotretinoin.

Side effects include skin redness and peeling, gen settles. Sun sensitivity – apply at night and wash off in morning. Use lower strength if burning, irritation or dryness. Retinoids should be avoided in pregnancy – discuss contraception if necessary.

#### **Topical antibiotics**

Reduce the number of bacteria and inflammation, little effect at unplugging blocked pores.

Erythromycin and clindamycin are effective, however resistance is increasing. Therefore use bp or azelaic acid first line, avoid topical and oral abx simultaneously, local guidelines recommend oral first line with topical for those who cannot tolerate oral. If topical antibacterial is effective, use repeated courses, short courses bp/aa may eliminate resistant bacteria. Topical abx need to be used for 6 months.

#### **Azelaic Acid**

Works by unblocking pores, some reduction of inflamed acne, but less effective than abx and bp.

### **Oral Treatments**

#### **Antibiotics**

Clear inflamed acne spots and reduce inflammation. Not good at unblocking pores – may need concomitant topical treatment.

1<sup>st</sup> line doxycycline 100mg od, 2<sup>nd</sup> line lymecycline 408mg od, 3<sup>rd</sup> line Erythromycin 500mg bd. Use for 3 months and review.

Tetracycline based abx: Not for use under 12, not in pregnancy, discuss contraception. Women on the pill should take additional precautions for first three weeks.

#### **Isotretinoin**

Suppresses sebum production, specialist initiation. Teratogenic, other s/e include dry skin/mucous membranes, nose bleeds, joint pains. Minimum course 16 weeks.

#### **Co-cyprindiol**

Cyproterone acetate with ethinylestradiol contains anti-androgen. AKA Dianette. Same effectiveness as oral broad spectrum, useful if woman also requires oral contraception. Increased risk of venous thromboembolism – use only in women with severe acne & hirsutism.