

ASK YOUR DOCTOR

A Double Punch To Knock Out Acne

(NAPSA)—It's every teenager's worst nightmare; looking in the mirror and seeing a face full of pimples.

Acne is the most commonly diagnosed skin disorder in the U.S., and is most prevalent in the teenage population. According to the American Academy of Dermatology, close to 100 percent of people between the ages of 12 and 17 have an occasional pimple, regardless of race or ethnic background. By their mid-teens, however, more than 40 percent of adolescents have acne severe enough to require medical treatment by a physician.

Acne occurs when hair follicles become clogged by skin cells that block the opening of pores. If the blocked pore is not visible, it forms a whitehead; if the pore is open and visible, it forms a blackhead. Red, inflamed papules and pustules are formed when acne bacteria break through the whitehead or blackhead. The most common form of acne, acne vulgaris, is a constellation of whiteheads, blackheads, papules and pustules.

Severe acne can cause scarring and affect a person's self-image, causing insecurity and feelings of inferiority. An on-line survey of more than 1,100 teenagers, conducted in 2000 by Yankelovich Partners for the American Counseling Association, found that more than three-quarters of teenage acne sufferers (77 percent) say their condition makes them feel self-conscious, ugly, embarrassed, unhappy or depressed.

New Two-in-One Treatment Available

Acne is commonly treated with over-the-counter products that control mild forms of acne; antibiotics, both topical and oral, are often prescribed to clear up more moderate to severe cases.

Now patients have an exciting new treatment option. The Food and Drug Administration has approved BenzaClin™ Topical Gel (clindamycin 1%-benzoyl peroxide 5% gel). This new prescription therapy combines clindamycin, the most widely prescribed topical antibiotic for acne with benzoyl peroxide, the most frequently used topical treatment for acne.



Doctors now have a new treatment option to help teens deal with acne.

BenzaClin™ is a water-based gel that is applied twice daily, morning and evening, or as directed by a physician. Clindamycin acts to destroy acne-causing bacteria, known as *P. acnes*, on the skin, while benzoyl peroxide dries the skin and helps prevent the growth of bacteria.

"I have studied every topical and systemic antibiotic used in the treatment of acne, and until now, the topical antibiotic with the greatest effect on reducing the inflammation caused by *P. acnes* was Benzamycin®," said James J. Leyden, MD, professor of dermatology, University of Pennsylvania. "BenzaClin™ is a new generation, a step forward in acne treatment. In my experience, I believe it is more effective, works more rapidly against *P. acnes*, plus it has Benzamycin's benefit of containing benzoyl peroxide, which is a component of fighting bacterial resistance."

The side effect most commonly seen with BenzaClin™ is dry skin, which was experienced by 12 percent of patients in the clinical trials. Diarrhea, bloody diarrhea and pseudomembranous colitis have been reported with topical clindamycin. Discontinuation is recommended if significant diarrhea develops.

If you have acne, seek the advice of a doctor who can help address individual skin care needs and provide appropriate therapy. To learn more about this condition, log on to www.counseling.org/teenacne or www.benzaclin.com.