



## Manhattan Beach

### Dermatology

2809 N. Sepulveda Blvd.,

Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Phone: 310.802.8180 - FAX: 310.802.8150

#### **ACNE TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS:**

During your consultation, you will be given a home treatment program prescribed for your level of acne and your particular skin type. Carefully follow your treatment plan. If you are having a problem or not improving, changes in your treatment program will be made at your next visit. The plan is designed not only to improve acne and heal active pimples faster but also to prevent scarring.

**How to apply medications:** Topical acne medications are to be applied in a thin layer all over the face, not just to spot treat active pimples.

**Back and chest acne:** If your back and chest are involved, treat these areas also. If using a benzoyl peroxide product on the back, use it at night only with white shirts, sheets and pillow cases to prevent bleaching.

**Facial waxing:** Stop Retin-A, Tazorac, Differin, Ziana, Veltin, Atralin, and Epiduo seven days prior to facial waxing.

**Benzoyl peroxide:** Duac, Benzaclin, Acanya, and Manhattan Beach Dermatology blemish clearing gel and washes contain benzoyl peroxide which can bleach fabrics. White towels and sheets are recommended. With cleansers, be sure to rinse thoroughly after use.

**Dryness:** Apply non-comedogenic (not pore clogging) moisturizers such as Cetaphil, Cerave, Neutrogena, Purpose, or Elta. These may be applied over your acne medications, before applying makeup.

**Irritation:** Peeling and redness can occur until tolerance is developed, especially when using benzoyl peroxide, Retin-A, Differin, Ziana, Veltin, Atralin, Epiduo or Tazorac. Consider stopping these medications for 2-3 days and then restart every other night when calmed down. Moisturizers and gentle cleansers (Cetaphil/Cerave) should be used during this period.

**Flaring of acne:** Not common, but can occur during early treatment as blocked pores may begin surfacing and will clear out. This will pass, keep up the treatment.

**No improvement:** Be patient, since all treatments for acne take several weeks to see visible clearing. Maximal improvement may even take several months. Adjustments will be made during follow up visits if you fail to improve significantly.

**Sun exposure:** Topical and oral medications can make you more sensitive to the sun. Apply sunscreen daily and reapply before afternoon sports or outdoor activities. Your regimen may need to be changed during the summer months if sun sensitivity is extreme.

**Diets:** There are clinical studies showing improvement in acne with a low glycemic diet. Avoid simple carbohydrates such as potatoes, white bread, white rice, white pasta and sweets. Avoid also dairy products also as the hormones in milk may contribute to acne (even milk from cows that were not given growth hormone).

**Picking and squeezing:** Avoid this because it usually results in larger, deeper, and longer lasting pimples and scars. Spot treat with benzoyl peroxide instead. If you cannot leave a lesion alone or if it is very large and painful, it can be injected with cortisone to speed resolution.

**Cosmetics:** Water-based products are recommended as well as mineral make-up such as Bare Minerals.

**Hormonal therapy:** The following oral contraceptives are more helpful for acne prone patients: Orthotricyclin, Orthocyclin, Yazmine, and Yaz. Your Ob-Gyn doctor may have a suggestion and will guide you in this phase of your treatment. It can take 3-6 months to see the effects of birth control pills on acne. Spinolactone can also be used to control acne in females as an alternative to birth control pills and usually works faster.

**Antibiotics:** Usually well tolerated, but side effects can include headaches, dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, vision problems, rashes, jaundice, and joint aches. Please call if you develop any side effects. Always take antibiotics with food and a full glass of water to decrease symptoms of nausea, stomach upset, and heartburn. Ignore pharmacy instructions to take antibiotics on an empty stomach.

**Discoloration/scars:** The first step in treatment is always getting your acne cleared. After your acne is under good control, scar creams, laser treatments and skin peels can be utilized to further improve your skin.

**Follow up visits:** Monthly follow up visits are recommended until your acne is under good control. During these visits, patients may undergo pore extraction treatments and/or light chemical peels as an adjunctive therapy. Also, medications may be increased in potency and number if needed and adjustments may be made depending on side effects. Once your acne is markedly improved, patients on long term oral therapies need to be seen every 3 months and patients on topical therapy, every 6-12 months.