

The Best Acne Treatments for Teens

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Platform Wordpress, Website/Blog: Girls Tween Fashion
Keywords: Teen Acne, Acne
Focus Key Phrase: The Best Acne Treatments
Word Count: 2,065



How to get rid of pimples fast?

If you're a teen, you're probably dealing with the dreaded breakouts of acne. Acne is no fun for anyone, but the good news is there are a lot of things you can do to keep the zits under control and keep your skin clear. With a whole lot of products on the market, it's hard to know which are the Best Acne Treatments for Teens. Here we've rounded up some of the best, based on Dr. recommendations and user reviews.

What Causes Acne?

Several factors are at play when it comes to breakouts. Sometimes it's hormones, sometimes it's not washing your face, or it's simply dirty fingers touching your face. I am certain that a few of my pimples as a teen (and even as an adult) have been the result of my dirty fingers [touching](#)

[my face](#). Your fingers don't produce sebum oil the way your face does, but the bacteria on your fingers and hands do not mix well with the oils on your face, resulting in acne.

Types of Acne

According to WebMD, there are 13 [types](#) of acne. These range from a simple pimple (aka Acne Vulgaris) to very serious cases of cystic acne.

- Comedones
- Blackheads
- Whiteheads
- Papules
- Pustules
- Nodules
- Cysts

Many of the various types of acne will require different acne treatments. Knowing what is causing the breakouts will help in solving the problem much better.

What Causes Pimples on Cheeks?

According to [skincare professionals](#), pimples that show up on your cheeks are the result of bacteria. Touching your face with dirty hands, smoking, dirty pillows or even rubbing your face on your pet can result in chronic acne on your cheeks. Pay close attention to what comes in contact with your cheeks to identify the culprit.

How to Prevent Acne

Wash your face, twice. Sometimes the first pass won't get everything. I use an oil wash first, followed by a gentle foaming cleanser and a toner such as Thayer's [witch hazel](#) afterward.

Know your [skin type](#) and provide it with the best tools for success. People who know whether their skin is oily, dry, acne prone or combination will have a greater advantage in choosing the right products and regimen that fits their skincare needs best!

Prevention is key. Use a retinoid product or a salicylic acid product regularly, even if its just a few times a week to keep your face clear of breakouts.

Exfoliate Exfoliating your skin once or twice a week will keep pores clear and surface cells healthy and fresh. Again, you want to know what your skin type is like, so you'll know which products to use and how often. If you have sensitive skin, you'll want to choose a product that is suitable for sensitive skin.

Why You Shouldn't Touch Your Face

The best thing to do if you think this is the reason for your acne is to be more aware of when (and where) you're touching your face. Also, be cautious about the types of bacteria that may be coming into contact with your skin. Sometimes new bacteria can cause a breakout. My sister swears that every time her cat touches her face with his mouth or nose, she gets a

pimple in the place where he touched. I'm not saying this is a for real thing, but definitely worth noting. If you see an area n your face that's indicative of where you're always touching, picking at, etc. Stop. doing. it.

"If you are acne-prone, absolutely face-touching can lead to breakouts. Rather than the word 'cause,' however, think 'trigger.' Acne is caused by the confluence three factors: excess oil, excess skin shedding and acne bacteria." - Dr. Ava Shamban, Board-certified dermatologist andAuthor of *Heal Your Skin*. Picking at your zits will only make it worse, and will create scars.



Acne scars example

The Best Acne Treatments

There is no "cure" for acne, but there are a lot of treatments that are working great for many teens and even adults. Acne usually clears up as you get older, but for now, here are a few things you can do to help keep those zits under control.

Fast-Acting "Overnight" Zit-Zappers for Prom

Great. Prom is 24 hours away and what happens? Pimples. Luckily, there are treatments that can work almost overnight. My go-to trusty source is definitely Mary Kay acne treatment gel. If

you have a few pimples here and there this topical treatment is 2+% BP and works like a charm. I have used it since I was a teenager and it's saved my face many times.

If you can't get to a Mary Kay consultant in time, you can try any BP cream that is 2-5%. If it's a major pimple crisis, you can call your dermatologist. He/she can shrink a pimple overnight with a steroid injection. This method is expensive and won't be covered by your insurance. Also, it can cause permanent damage to your skin if you get an injection in the same pore a second time. So, I recommend not going this route unless you absolutely *have to*. Benzoyl peroxide (BP) and [tea tree oil](#) can kill acne bacteria within 48 hours, and get rid of redness and swelling of pimples. Make sure you don't use too much, however! Benzoyl peroxide gels come in different strengths. For example, a 2.5% BP won't irritate your skin but doesn't work as fast as a 5% to 10% benzoyl peroxide gel. When the concentration of benzoyl peroxide is 5% or higher, there can be irritation, burning, itching, and peeling. The best advice is to start a skin care regimen the week before prom to keep any breakouts at bay.

BENZOYL PEROXIDE

Benzoyl peroxide is the most common treatment for [acne](#). My favorite is still the Acne Treatment Gel made by Mary Kay. Benzoyl Peroxide (BP) can be found in face washes, lotions, or gels. BP is the most effective acne treatment you can get without a prescription. It helps kill bacteria in the skin, clears oil ducts, and heals pimples. Sometimes the best thing you can do if you feel a pimple coming is to treat it immediately with topical BP. There are a lot of different brands and different strengths (2.25% up to 10%). The gel has been known to dry out your skin and make it red, flaky or irritated. If this is a concern, you may want to start with lower strengths and work your way up or try a wash or lotion first.

Related Articles:

[8 Steps to Insanely Beautiful Skin](#)

[Korean \(K Beauty\) Secrets](#)

[Light Therapy for Acne: Does it Actually Work?](#)

How to use Benzoyl Peroxide:

- Start slowly—only once a day with a 5% wash or lotion. After a week, try using it twice a day (morning and night) if your skin isn't too red or isn't peeling.
- Don't just dab it on top of your pimples. Apply a thin layer to the entire area where pimples may occur. Avoid the skin around your eyes.
- If your acne isn't any better after 4 to 6 weeks, try a 10% lotion or gel. Use it once a day at first and then try twice a day if it doesn't irritate your skin.

SALICYLIC ACID

Salicylic acid helps with the first cause by dissolving the type of skin debris that clogs pores and causes acne," says Dr. Schueller. Therefore, the best acne to treat with salicylic acid is blackheads and whiteheads. "Salicylic acid can directly dissolve the keratin plugs and regulate

the skin cells," says Dr. Nazarian. Brands like [Paula's Choice Clear](#), The Ordinary and [Neutrogena](#) offer products that contain salicylic acid.

CLAY MASKS

Clay masks have been shown to improve the health and clarity of your skin. Many spas offer whole body treatments with various clay masks. I keep a pretty wide array of skin masks in my cabinet for different treatments. For acne treatment and prevention, the best clays are those that remove impurities and dirt and keep your skin from becoming too oily. A clay mask such as [Aztec Secret Indian Clay](#) has proven to be very effective (and affordable) for many people. The reviews are pretty outstanding, also. Others you can try may be more expensive, but worth a shot if it means a clearer complexion. Try a charcoal mask such as [Aria Starr Dead Sea Mud Mask](#).

Kaolin clay-based masks have also been very effective in treating acne prone skin and are best for sensitive skin. If you're more into natural products, another mask to try is Natural Clear Acne Treatment Mask, which claims to work as effectively as Benzoyl Peroxide and Salicylic Acid.

Stronger Acne Treatments

- **Retinoids** If benzoyl peroxide doesn't work for you, there are other choices to try such as products from [Dr. Brandt's retinol](#) line, or any cream or serum with at least 2% retinoids. [Proactiv](#) has worked wonders for many teens and adults.
- Your **dermatologist or doctor** may also be able to prescribe a retinoid or retinol to be used on the skin (like Retin A, Differin, etc). These formulas come in a cream or gel and aids in clearing pores and oil ducts. These creams must be used exactly as directed. Try to stay out of the sun (including tanning salons) when taking this medicine since Retinoids can cause photosensitivity and cause your skin to peel and turn red.
- **Antibiotics** in cream, lotion, solution, or gel form, may be used for "inflammatory" acne (when you have red bumps or pus bumps). Antibiotics in pill form may be used if the treatments used on the skin don't help.
- **Isotretinoin** (brand names are Accutane, Amnesteem, Sotret, and Claravis) is a very strong medicine taken as a pill. It's only used for severe acne that hasn't responded adequately to other treatments. Because it's such a powerful drug, it must never be taken just before or during pregnancy. There is a danger of severe or even fatal deformities to unborn babies. Patients who take this medicine must be carefully supervised by a doctor knowledgeable about its usages, such as a pediatric dermatologist or other experts in treating acne. Isotretinoin should be used cautiously (and only with careful monitoring by a dermatologist and psychiatrist) in patients with a history of depression. Don't be surprised if your doctor requires a negative pregnancy test, some blood tests, and a signed consent form before prescribing isotretinoin.

Source: [Healthy children.org](#)



Stop popping at your zits!

While You're Acne Regimen is 'Doing Its Thing'

These are things to keep in mind while you're waiting for your treatment to start working:

- **Avoid wearing heavy makeup bases.** I know you want to hide the pimples, but clogging your pores right now is not a good idea. Try a lighter CC or BB cream or tinted moisturizer if you have to, but avoid thick concealers and foundations.
- **Don't pick at your acne or touch your face!** The idea is that we're trying to let the sores heal. Picking will only exacerbate the problem and lead to more bacteria, breakouts and potential scarring. (No matter how tempted you are, try not to pick at or touch your face!)
- **Be patient.** Give your treatment enough time to do its work. Sometimes it may take a few weeks to see results. Give it time. If it isn't helping at all, consider changing to another treatment after a 6-12 week treatment.
- **Be consistent.** Follow your skin care regimen every day. Don't stop and start each time your skin changes. Not using it regularly is the most common reason why treatments fail.
- **Follow the directions.** Use your treatments correctly. overdoing it may result in irritation, while not following instructions correctly could result in poor results.

- **Only use your medicine.** Doctors prescribe medicine specifically for particular patients. What's good for a friend may not be good for you.
- **Don't overdo it.** Too much scrubbing can make your skin worse; leading to being more irritated and dried out. Too much benzoyl peroxide or topical retinoid creams can make your face red and flaky; Too much oral antibiotic may also cause side effects. Don't overdo the treatments, just be patient.