

Health Briefs

ACNE: Clearing up myths

Nearly 85% of us experience acne during our lives, but misinformation about the condition abounds. At the recent annual meeting of the American Academy of Dermatology, Alexa Boer Kimball, M.D., helped clarify advice:

Hygiene. A dirty face doesn't cause acne, and repeated washing can be an irritant. Do wash twice a day

with a gentle soap or, if you are treating active acne, a medicated cleanser.

Exercise. It doesn't make acne worse, at least for men with acne on their back and chest. Avoid tight-fitting exercise clothing and gear.

Picking. Don't do it (unless you can squeeze the white sebum up and out

swiftly, once, without force). Picking can cause scarring. Diet. No study correlates fat intake - specifically chips and chocolate with acne, but you should eat a balanced diet for your general health. If

you're convinced certain foods make your acne worse, then skip them.

Tip for teens

Be sure to use "non-comedogenic" toiletries, which shouldn't clog pores.