

## What Is Acne?

Acne is a disease that affects the skin's oil glands. The small holes in your skin (pores) connect to oil glands under the skin. These glands make an oily substance called sebum. The pores connect to the glands by a canal called a follicle. Inside the follicles, oil carries dead skin cells to the surface of the skin. A thin hair also grows through the follicle and out to the skin. When the follicle of a skin gland clogs up, a pimple grows.

**Most pimples are found on the face, neck, back, chest, and shoulders. Acne is not a serious health threat but, it can cause scars.**

## How Should People With Acne Care for Their Skin?

Here are some ways to care for skin if you have acne:

- Clean skin gently. Use a mild cleanser in the morning, evening, and after heavy workouts. Scrubbing the skin does not stop acne. It can even make the problem worse.
- Try not to touch your skin. People who squeeze, pinch, or pick their pimples can get scars or dark spots on their skin.
- Many acne medicines can make people more likely to sunburn. Being in the sun a lot can also make skin wrinkle and raise the risk of skin cancer.
- Choose makeup carefully. All makeup should be oil free. But some people still get acne even if they use these products.

## What Things Can Make Acne Worse?

Some things can make acne worse:

- Changing hormone levels in teenagers and young adults
- Pressure from bike helmets, backpacks, or tight collars
- Pollution and high humidity
- Squeezing or picking at pimples
- Hard scrubbing of the skin.

You may need to visit your Primary Care Provider if your acne gets worse.

## Reference:

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disease (2007)