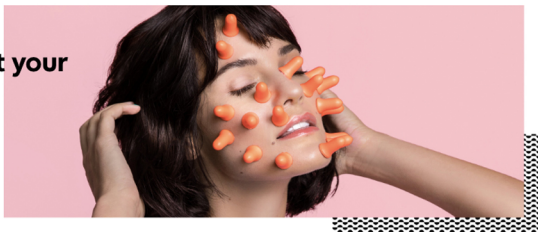


# learn all about your acne



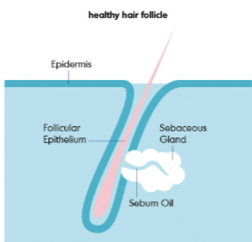
what is acne?

types of acne    what causes acne    how to treat acne

## what is acne?

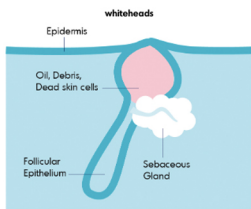
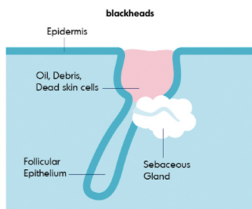
Acne is one of the most common skin conditions. It's so common that more than 50 million Americans struggle with pimples every year... that's practically 1 in 7 people. Plus, dermatologists report that 85% of people between the ages of 12 and 24 have some type of acne. That's a lot of people dealing with breakouts!

There are two kinds of acne: noninflammatory and inflammatory. But in order to understand these types of acne and what causes them, you've got to take a super quick science lesson.

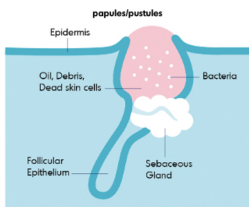


Let's start with pores. They're tiny little openings in your skin that help your skin breathe and sweat. They also help your skin shed old, dead cells and create new ones. Most of your pores are connected to a sebaceous gland. This gland produces sebum, which you probably just refer to as oil. But technically speaking, sebum is the natural, oily-waxy substance that your body creates to lubricate your skin and make you "waterproof".

Sometimes, those dead skin cells that your body is trying to shed get trapped in your sebum, along with the dirt and bacteria that's on the surface of your skin. Together, this trifecta creates the perfect recipe for a **clogged pore**. Clogged pores are the **noninflammatory acne** we referred to before, but you probably talk about clogged pores as **blackheads** and **whiteheads**. Dermatologists officially diagnose them as a **comedo**, or comedones if there are several.

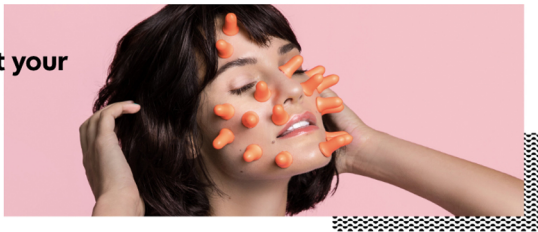


You probably think of pimples as red, painful, pus-filled spots on your face. You're not wrong. These types of breakouts are called **inflammatory acne**. But those angry red pimples started as clogged pores. This dramatic change happens thanks to bacteria called *propionibacterium acnes* bacteria, or *P. acnes* for short. *P. acnes* bacteria love to eat dead skin cells, sebum, and dirt... yep, the exact stuff that's in your clogged pores.



When *P. acnes* bacteria start eating away at your clogged pores, they multiply. As they multiply, your immune system realizes there's a foreign invasion and rushes a whole bunch of white blood cells to the area to kill off the bad bacteria. It's actually this rush of blood, and your body fighting these foreign invaders, that causes all that redness and inflammation around your pimples, and the puss inside them. Pretty interesting stuff, if we do say so ourselves.

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## types of acne

### noninflammatory Acne



#### blackheads

When the perfect combination of dirt, oil and dead skin cells get stuck in your pore, you get a blackhead, aka an open comedo. These clogged pores get their name because they oxidize, which means they turn black when they are exposed to oxygen. Blackheads aren't infected, so they aren't sensitive or sore, and they're never red or inflamed.



#### whiteheads

This version of a clogged pore is a closed comedo, and it's a small, flesh-colored bump that may have a white-ish look... hence the name. That bump is actually dead skin cells, dirt and oil trapped under a super thin layer of your skin. Just like blackheads, whiteheads aren't sensitive or painful, they're not infected, and don't have any pus or redness.

### inflammatory Acne



#### papules

Those small red bumps on the surface of your skin are papules. They're not filled with pus, which means they won't have a white or yellow tip. When you've got a papule, the skin around it is usually red and inflamed, but it isn't always sensitive or painful.



#### pustules

When you imagine a perfect, ready-to-pop pimple, it's probably a pustule you're thinking of. They have that distinct white or yellow puss-filled head, the skin around them is red and irritated, and they can be painful.



#### cystic acne

When big, tender pimples develop deep in your skin, you're dealing with cystic acne, which is often associated with hormones. Cystic breakouts tend to get pretty big, they're full of pus, and are usually red and inflamed, not to mention painful.



#### nodule

Nodules are similar to cystic acne because they're also large and start deep in the skin. The difference is that nodules are harder when you touch them, and they're usually bigger and more painful, too.

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## what causes acne?



**genetics**



**hormones**



**certain medications**



**tight, sweat-soaked clothes**

## what makes acne worse?

Dietary choices, comedogenic cosmetic products, stress, not taking care of your skin regularly or properly, and/or pressure and friction on your skin can all make your acne worse.

## how can you avoid acne?



**follow** a strict skincare regimen



**don't** over wash your skin



**stay away** from harsh physical scrubs



**stop** touching your pimples!



**avoid** comedogenic (aka pore clogging) products



**wash** towels and sheets regularly



**change** out of sweaty workout clothes and shower ASAP



**avoid** hormone-altering foods, including dairy and alcohol

## mythbusters



### myth

Eating greasy food or drinking soda causes breakouts.

### fact

The only way oily food will cause acne is if you rub it all over your face. The type of food that can affect acne is dairy because dairy products often have hormones in them. There are very few conclusive studies to prove that what you eat affects your acne, though studies have linked acne with foods that increase hormone levels and production (such as alcohol).



### myth

Popping pimples makes them go away faster.

### fact

We get it — it feels great to get rid of all that gunk and pus. Our founder is Dr. Pimple Popper, after all. But popping your pimples is probably going to make your skin bleed, cause irritation, and then leave scars or dark spots. And if you pop your pimple with dirty hands or tools, you are putting even more bacteria onto your skin, which makes your pimples spread to other parts of your face or stick around for way longer.



### myth

Obsessively washing your face prevents breakouts.

### fact

When you have acne, you might feel like your skin is always dirty, or be tempted to wash your face all the time (sometimes pretty aggressively). We get the urge, but this will just irritate your pimples. All that extra rubbing and friction can cause redness, rashes, irritation... and even more breakouts. Plus, it will dry out your skin.