

Surprising things that cause acne

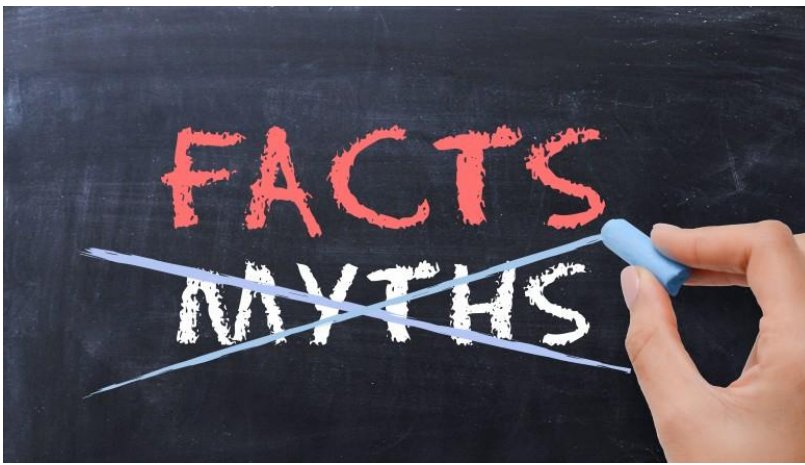
By: Crystal Harry



Acne is "the most common skin disease," affecting about 80 percent of the population between the ages of 11 and 30. But even babies get pimples, and people in their 40s and 50s experience breakouts as well. The market is saturated with products promising clear skin, but the first step in defeating ugly breakouts, is understanding just what causes them. There are plenty of theories and old wives' tales about what causes acne, like eating too much chocolate, or not having clean skin. But I wanted real, expert advice. So, I talked to doctors and skincare specialists around the country, and they told me about some surprising things that cause acne, and how to rid your face of those unsightly blemishes.

Ditching the myths

The best place to start, is by dispelling the myths of what actually causes acne. Dr. Fayne Frey, a board certified dermatologist, said there are only four main causes of acne — clogged pores, hormones, oil production, and bacteria. She said things like hormones, steroids, facials, and a diet full of pasta, chips, dairy, and junk food can make acne worse, but those four causes are the real reason for breakouts.



Frey said there is no scientific evidence that makeup, greasy foods, or dirt on the face are actual causes for acne. However, washing your face twice a day with a mild cleanser has been shown to reduce adolescent acne. **Dr. Gabrielle Francis** adds that skin infections, blood sugar imbalances, stress, and toxins can also cause acne. "Acne can be one of the side effects of living life like a rock star," she said.

Your nightcap

Dr. Francis named alcohol as a culprit people don't often think about, but it's a very common cause. That hungover feeling you get in the morning is often due to dehydration and toxins trying to leave your body. It results in your skin looking like you feel. That dehydration effect dries out the skin, and the toxins in alcohol speed up: p the aging process. A fizzy cocktail may seem like a well-deserved treat at the end of a long week, but soft drinks and alcohol are a losing combination, since soft drinks rob the skin of vital nutrients. A dull, aged complexion is the price to pay for too many Jack and Cokes, Francis said.

