

Acne is a chronic inflammatory skin condition characterized by skin eruptions on the face, chest, back and shoulders. Acne vulgaris, the least severe form, is a superficial disease that affects the skin's oil-secreting glands and hair follicles and manifests as blackheads, whiteheads and redness. Acne conglobata, a more severe form, is characterized by the formation of pustules and cysts with the potential for subsequent scarring. Both forms are more common among males than females with onset typically at or shortly after puberty but can also occur much later in life as adult acne.

The underlying causes of acne can vary in nature, but some of the most common causes include:

- **Hormonal shifts during puberty.** During puberty, increases in levels of testosterone cause the sebaceous glands to enlarge and produce more sebum which results in acne.
- **Poor intestinal health** causing excess toxins to be absorbed by the intestines can lead to severe acne.
- **Food allergies** are the number one cause of acne, and the worse the acne the more likely food allergies are involved. Eating a food to which the body is allergic leads to a continuous toxic reaction. In such a case the immune system fights the food as if it were an invading toxin. This can cause inflammation in the skin resulting in acne. a continuous toxic reaction. In such a case the immune system fights the food as if it were an invading organism. This can cause inflammation in the skin resulting in acne. Eliminating the allergenic food completely clears the skin in most cases!
- **Poor liver function** can cause the skin to attempt to take over the detoxifying aspects of the liver which then causes outbreaks like acne to occur.
- **An overgrowth of yeast called Candida** can cause an imbalance in the sebum production in the skin leading to acne.
- **Hormonal imbalances** can occur in males and females in adulthood in the testosterone levels which also creates an environment for acne production

The top recommended tests to uncover the underlying cause include:

- **Food Allergy Testing.** This is done through a blood test which tests for a large variety of food and/or environmental allergens often implicated in acne.
- **Hormone Panel.** This test is done through a combination of blood and saliva to uncover imbalances in certain hormones such Cortisol, DHEA, Estradiol, Progesterone, Testosterone and Thyroid hormones (TSH, T4, T3 and TPO).
- **Digestive Function Test.** This is done through a stool and saliva test and helps to identify any potential digestive imbalances including Candida and other yeasts, digestive enzymes, pH, parasites, worms, bacterial overgrowth, inflammation, immune function and digestive intolerances.

The best treatments for acne elimination is treating the underlying cause. Food allergy elimination is the most common and effective source of treatment. Certain nutrients such as Vitamin A, Zinc, Omega 3's, Vitamin B5/6, Probiotics and liver cleansing herbs also are very beneficial for achieving clear skin.