

How to help teens overcome skin problems

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Emotional factors - and seasons - can conspire against teens when it comes to breakouts, says Dr. Doris Day an New York dermatologist and mother of two teens understands first-hand the stresses that affect teen skin.

But Dr. Day, who claims her chief role with teens is as an educator, says acne doesn't have to be an expected scourge. Dr. Day acknowledges that compliance is an issue with teens, particularly when they are tired, and don't have the time to spend on their skin. But there are new prescription products which only have to be used once a day, and are a good way to get started, she points out, adding that once a teen gets motivated, she can make professional suggestions, like adding an exfoliating cleanser. The dermatologist has an absolute rule: "Do't pick." adding, "the more people touch their pimples, the longer they last, and the greater the risk of scarring." She says it's important to see a dermatologist when there is any scarring, adding that "even if you have just one pimple a month, and it leaves a scar - that's 12 a year."

Contrary to popular belief, a teen's diet has nothing to do with her skin condition, Dr. Day says. Greasy foods should be avoided for other reasons, she notes, but they do not harm the skin. In rare cases, a teen will be sensitive to dairy. "It's not the fat content, but most of the cows we get milk from are pregnant, and the hormones can affect the skin," she says.

Teens should develop a relationship with a dermatologist by bringing in the products they use, and discussing their current routine. While there are a lot of choices in products, many teens operate under the erroneous assumption that "if a little is good, a lot is better."

Dr. Day is the author of [100 Questions and Answers About Acne](#) and [Forget the Facelift](#).

For more info: Judy Antell is the mother of 2 teens (and 1 tween) and remembers the emotional devastation in her teens years of just one pimple.