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## **Acne and Homeopathy**

By Frank King, DC

Acne is perhaps the most common health condition that can affect people for their entire life. The scars of acne go much deeper than the skin. Acne scars the vital self image of an individual, which can orchestrate success or failure, happiness or oppression, and many other outcomes in life.

The British Journal of Plastic Surgery published the article, "The Quasimodo Complex." The two physician reported on a random study of 11,000 prison inmates who committed serious crimes (murder or rape, etc.) They clearly documented a trend showing 60 percent of the 11,000 offenders had facial deformities: acne scars, birth marks, protruding ears, misshapen noses or receding chins. In the average adult population only 20.2 percent of all people may be said to have these characteristics. The article ended suggesting that the hostility and rejection these criminals encountered from classmates through school could have pushed them toward the state of emotional imbalance that ultimately led to criminal acts.

People form a self-image based largely on what kind of images other people mirror back. We give inordinate regard to the physical body (shell) we inhabit. It takes a rare individual to look through that shell and acknowledge the true inherent human worth that God equally gives to all. The universal stereotype of equating ugly with bad and beautiful with good is a worthy challenge for all.

Homeopathy offers a vital piece of the puzzle to restoring the individual's constitution for overcoming acne. Whether teenager or middle-aged, there is hope for the condition of acne that scars in more ways than one.

The sublingual testing procedure discussed in earlier articles and in our Physicians Reference Manual, takes only seconds to perform. Testing a well formulated homeopathic acne combination product will commonly correct an acne problem. However, not all acne cases are that simple. A homeopathic detox and drainage product may test positive, and prove to be an essential piece of the puzzle of health. There are a number of these type of products to consider for the liver, lymph, blood, kidneys, bowels, and skin.

I always recommend looking at a patient's total health picture. Matching other health problems to the appropriate homeopathic formula may provide a vital connection to the underlying causes of the acne condition. The sublingual testing procedure will provide confirmation to the phenomenon.

Homeopathy added to your chiropractic management program will effectively broaden your scope of practice. However, when dealing with acne as well as many other conditions, your patient's lifestyle management is essential to your successful management of their health. The following are some helpful hints which you may want to hand out to your patients with acne problems. I hope this will be helpful to you and your patients.

### **Lifestyle Management Procedures**

Acne eruptions are caused by an interruption of the skin's natural processes. Acne can range from a thinly scattered area of pimples and blackheads to an area covered with large cysts.

Pimples begin in the skin's hair follicles which are connected to the oil-producing sebaceous glands. When onset of acne occurs, it means the body isn't performing two jobs necessary for the maintenance of healthy skin:

1. The hair follicles aren't getting rid of dead cells fast enough.
2. The sebaceous glands are pumping out too much. When dead cells stick to a hair follicle full of sebum, it provides a breeding ground for the growth of bacteria which can cause acne.

Acne often appears during adolescence with the changing hormone levels. Stress can also affect hormone levels and can explain why some adults develop acne. Changes during the menstrual cycle may create fluctuations in hormonal levels in women which can cause acne; oral contraceptives are another source that changes hormone levels. Other causes of acne could be occupational exposures such as chemicals, toxins, and grease and oil.

No matter what's causing your acne, there are lifestyle management steps that can help you in the preventative maintenance of your skin.

- Know what foods are the offenders. It's a good idea to avoid foods such as sugar, white flour products, soft drinks, refined foods, artificial sweeteners, chocolate, butter, meat, cheese, and iodized salt.
- Manage your stress! Regular exercise is important for overall health as it boosts endorphin levels, which in turn can ease stress, anxiety, etc. Exercise can also help flush the impurities through the skin by way of perspiration. Seeking help from a professional counselor might help with stress management as well.
- Be gentle! Your skin is already irritated if you have acne, so be sure to use a mild soap. Do not use a washcloth or exfoliate. Gently massage soap into skin with fingertips. A soap containing sulphur is a good one to try.
- Oiliness can be minimized by wiping skin with an astringent. A good one to try is witch hazel. Apply a few drops to a cotton ball and gently wipe skin. \* Steaming the face will help clean and sooth irritated skin. Boil 2 cups of water with 1/2 cup chamomile or fennel, remove pot from heat and drape a towel to form a tent. Steam face 5 to 10 minutes before rinsing with cool water.
- Clay masks and mud packs can help lift off superficial grease, dead skin, and tone the skin. These are available in most health food stores. To apply, spread evenly over the face, dry 10-15 minutes before rinsing with cool water.
- Avoid wearing heavy, oily makeup which may clog pores and cause acne.
- Don't pick, press, or rub pimples as you risk spreading bacteria which increases the chance for scarring.

- Acne can affect self-esteem. Children should be treated fairly young if they start showing signs of acne, especially if parents suffered from acne. Encourage them to follow a healthy lifestyle management program.
- There are supplements and herbs which can encourage healthy skin. The following is a list of these along with a recommended dose:

Beta carotene	50,000-100,000 IU/day
Vitamin C	1,000-2,000 mg/day
Zinc	45 mg/day
Brewers yeast	1 tbsp 2x/day
Vitamin B6	250 mg/day
Lecithin	1 capsule before meals
Echinacea & goldenseal	tea mixture

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