



# fact sheet 8

## Teenagers

### Understanding your teenage skin

Teenagers have a lot to deal with, their friends, schoolwork, parents, and social life can all cause them stress. One of the things high on a teenager's worry list is their skin. Every teen wants flawless skin, a clear complexion and a glowing appearance. But at times, it is indeed very difficult to maintain healthy, flawless skin. There might be many factors contributing to the unhealthy and unappealing appearance of the skin: nutrition, genetics, stress, anxiety, and lifestyle to name a few. It is very important to maintain a proper skin care regimen for every teenager in order to prevent various skin problems. The hormonal changes that occur during the teen years tend to cause an increased production of oil (sebum) which can lead to breakouts. Kids that had normal to dry skin before puberty are likely to see occasional pimples and kids whose skin was already a bit oily can often suffer significant skin problems. Although virtually all teenagers will see some changes in their skin, with proper care, breakouts can be kept to a minimum.

### Looking after your skin

To help maintain healthy looking skin, wash your face regularly. This is one of the most basic and fundamental skin care tips for teens and adults too. Inadequate washing can clog up your skin pores causing spots and acne, so it is important to establish a good routine.

### Maintenance

- **Cleanse** - Regular cleansing of your skin is important and when done properly, removes dirt, grime and excess oil on the surface of the skin and skin pores which helps the cell renewal process. Choose a cleanser that breaks down the oil without stripping the skin of all oils. Harsh cleansers tend to increase the skin's natural production of oil, making the situation worse. If your skin is sensitive or a bit on the dry side, it can be helpful to use cleansing products that contain soothing ingredients such as aloe vera. *or*  
Wash your face with tepid, not hot water and be sure to rinse well. Residue left on the skin can block pores, causing additional breakouts. Pat the skin dry, rather than rubbing, and follow up with a toner, if necessary. For most people, washing the face twice a day should be sufficient; if your skin is especially oily, three times may be better.
- **Tone** - Facial toners improve the skin's texture when applied to oily skin after cleansing.
- **Moisturise** - Products that treat acne can be a bit drying, so choose an oil-free moisturiser to replenish your skin's moisture balance. Always use upward and outward strokes to apply your moisturiser.

### Extras

- **Sun** is very damaging to your skin and can cause skin cancer. Always use sunscreen before heading outdoors, even for short periods of time. It's a good idea to get into the habit of applying sunscreen every day as part of your morning routine. If you will be outside for an extended time, be sure to reapply your sunscreen regularly.
- **Exercise** - releases feel-good hormones called endorphins, which help relieve stress and prevent the accompanying influx of testosterone it creates (the male hormone). Exercise boosts the body's natural detoxification process and stimulates the flow of oxygen to cells, increasing healthy skin. But remember to always wash after exercising to get rid of the toxins and grime that build up on the skin.
- **Sleep** - skin renews itself over night, so if you are not getting enough sleep this will show on your skin (you need at least seven to eight hours a night)
- **Diet** - your skin is a reflection of what's going on inside so for healthy skin we should work on the inside out. Fresh fruit and vegetables and not too many sugary, saturated fat and "fast foods."
- **Water** - drinking at least 1.5 litres of water a day will help your body to flush out skin-dulling toxins and skin hydrated.

### Don'ts:

- Don't pop a pimple! Squeezing a blemish can lead to scarring; it will clear up on its own in a few days.
- Don't Wash your face with harsh cleansers or those that contain bits of rough material designed to slough off skin cells. Gentle is better.
- Don't worry too much. Everyone experiences occasional breakouts.

### Shaving for boys

Boys can start shaving anytime, everyone's hair grows at a different rate, some have full beards aged 12 while others only a full wisps for life. On average men aged 18-24 shave on average four times a week.

### Where should I shave?

Most men shave the hair on their lower face. Some shave body hair, too. This may be for cultural reasons or because they compete in sports that need them to be streamlined. Some just prefer the smooth look.

### How to do it?

Most men wet shave. This means using a manual razor and lubricating with foam or gel. Alternatively you can dry shave with an electric razor a method that is technically easier, but expensive. And some find the result not as smooth as wet shaving. Plus electric razors have a habit of causing razor burn or bumps.

#### Step by step guide

- Wet your face with warm water
- Rub in plenty of shaving foam
- Hold the razor firmly (but gently) against your skin
- Scrape the skin, moving in the direction of hair growth
- Rinse (your face and the razor) with cold water
- Pat dry
- You can apply a light moisturiser to cool and smooth the face

### How to tell what direction your hairs are growing?

Hairs seem to grow at different angles in different areas of our face. Move your fingers across your skin back and forth in one direction, there is more resistance this direction is the WRONG way to shave

### Body changes In Teenagers

Puberty causes all kinds of changes in your body. Your skin and scalp may suddenly get oily very easily. Every day it seems you have new hair growing in different places. At times, you seem to sweat for no reason — and you may notice there are odours where you never had them before.

### When to start using a deodorant?

Perspiration, or sweat, comes from sweat glands that you've always had in your body. But thanks to puberty, these glands not only become more active than before, they also begin to secrete different chemicals into the sweat that has a stronger smelling odour. You might notice this odour under your arms in your armpits. Your feet and genitals might also have new smells.

The best way to keep clean is to bathe or shower every day using a mild soap and warm water. This will help wash away any bacteria that contribute to the smells. If you sweat a lot, you might find that shirts, T-shirts, socks, and underwear made from cotton or other natural materials will help absorb sweat more effectively. If you're concerned about the way your underarms smell, you can try using a deodorant or deodorant with antiperspirant. Deodorants get rid of the odour of sweat by covering it up, and antiperspirants actually stop or dry up perspiration. They come in sticks, roll-ons, gels, sprays, and creams. All brands are similar (and ones that say they're made for a man or for a woman are similar, too, except for some perfumes are added). If you choose to use deodorant or antiperspirant, be sure to read the directions. Some work better if you use them at night, whereas others recommend that you put them on in the morning. But keep in mind that some teens don't need deodorants or antiperspirants. Deodorant and antiperspirant commercials may try to convince you that you'll have no friends or dates if you don't use their product, but if you don't think you smell and you take daily baths or showers and wear clean clothes, you may be fine without them.

### Why is my hair changing?

The hormones that create acne are the same ones that can make you feel like you're suddenly styling your hair with a comb dipped in motor oil. Each strand of hair has its own sebaceous (oil) gland, which keeps the hair shiny and waterproof. But during puberty, when the sebaceous glands produce extra oil, it can make your hair look too shiny, oily, and greasy. Washing your hair every day or every other day can help control oily hair. Use warm water and a small amount of shampoo to work up a lather. Don't scrub or rub too hard — this doesn't get rid of oil any better and can irritate your scalp or damage your hair. After you've rinsed, you can follow up with a conditioner if you like; again, one for oily hair might work best.

#### Disclaimer

*While every effort has been made to ensure that the information given in this leaflet is accurate, not every treatment will be suitable or effective for every person. All content within Pure and Gentle SkinCare is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own doctor or any other health care professional. Pure and Gentle SkinCare is not responsible or liable for any diagnosis made by a user based on the content of Pure and Gentle SkinCare website or advisers. Always consult your own GP if you're in any way concerned about your health as he or she will be able to advise in greater detail.*

#### Other helpful information sites

[www.talkeacne.com](http://www.talkeacne.com)  
[www.stopspots.org](http://www.stopspots.org)  
[www.acnehelp.org.uk](http://www.acnehelp.org.uk)  
[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)  
[www.goodtoknow.co.uk](http://www.goodtoknow.co.uk)