

Any acne therapy has three goals:

first, to kill the *Propionibacterium acnes*; second, to reduce inflammation; and, third, to prevent the sebaceous glands from producing excess oil, clogging the pores and creating an environment that allows the *P. acnes* bacteria to flourish. Until recently most moderate to severe acne has been treated by dermatologists with a combination of antibiotics to kill the bacteria and drying agents like Accutane and topical retinoids to control excess oiliness.

Recent research has poked some serious holes into two dermatological staples for treating acne: One study that appeared in a February, 2004, edition of *Journal of the American Medical Association* pointed to a strong association between long-term and/or frequent use of antibiotics and the incidence of breast cancer. And earlier this year, when a Congressman's son being treated with Accutane committed suicide, the public became aware of a seven-year-old FDA warning linking use of the powerful drug with serious depression. And these risks were in addition to the existing concern that overuse of antibiotics was contributing to resistant strains of bacteria and the numerous less serious side effects associated with the use of both antibiotics and Accutane.

By Linda Kossoff and
Linda W. Lewis

All Clear



Courtesy SilhouetteTone

LumiFacials trigger skin cell repairs that can completely clear breakouts. Superior Skin Secrets Salon in Arizona achieved outstanding results with this client after only six treatments.

Fortunately, many doctors and estheticians are cautiously optimistic that they've found less risky alternatives. These range from sophisticated lasers that can be used only by physicians to ultrasonic and LED devices now being used in many day spas, as well as a range of promising nutritional regimens and topical treatments.

DAYSPA editors have taken a close look at some of the new equipment-based therapies and at the evolving home care products that are an important part of any treatment plan.

Nonablative Lasers

In November 2003, the Smoothbeam diode laser, made by Candela Corp., became the first laser approved by the FDA to treat facial acne. Lasers like the Smoothbeam emit a 1,450 nm wavelength of light that's strongly absorbed

by water in the skin. As the light penetrates, it generates heat, creating a thermal injury that alters the structure and function of the sebaceous glands. This drastically reduces acne lesions without significant side effects.

At the Westside Medical Spa in Westwood, California, Dr. Alexander Rivkin, uses a pulsed-light system from Palomar Medical Technologies and a vitamin A gel to treat acne with photodynamic therapy (PDT).

"I am seeing extremely impressive results with my acne patients," reports Rivkin. "Their skin is staying clear for several years after treatment, and that's enough time so that, for a good number of people, the acne doesn't recur. Unlike with Accutane, there are no serious side effects to worry about, no monthly blood tests for pregnancy or liver damage, no prolonged discomfort. Yet the efficacy is very similar."

One of Rivkin's patients, who had been treated with antibiotics including

Abbe Labs End-Zit product regimen incorporates active ingredients such as zinc oxide sulfur, talc, camphor, alpha hydroxy acids, salicylic acid and botanicals. The line includes a Drying Lotion that's available in six tints, as well as Blemish Control Toner, Cleanser, Mask and Moisturizer. Contact: 800/457-0990; www.endzit.com.

Atzen (distributed by Universal Companies) The Purifiante Skin Purifying System consists of natural, gel-based products that contain no drying agents. Instead, cornflower, algae, pollen extract, birch, yeast, zinc, hyaluronic acid, vitamin A and silk amino acids are called into play. The system includes AM and PM Cleansing Gels; AM and PM Purifying Toners and Gels; Purifying Peeling exfoliant; Mask; AM and PM Moisturizing Gel and SP Gel for Breakouts. Contact: 800/558-5571; www.universalcompanies.com.

Aveda Balancing Infusion for Oily Skin/Acne takes a preventive approach; it's formulated with flower and plant essences like lemon, lime, juniper and lavender to control surface oils and normalize oily skin before breakouts can occur. Yet, it can soothe blemished skin and work as a spot treatment. Contact: 800/328-0849; www.aveda.com.

Babor The PURE product system performs a gentle balancing act to calm and clear the skin. Products include a Day

Cream, Night Cream and Mask. Gentle astringents with hazel and horsetail extract are paired with vitamin E; tea tree oil and sodium shale oil sulfonate keep bacteria from spreading. Contact: 888/222-6791; www.babor.com.

Bio Jouvance The BioClarifying line emphasizes detoxification and healing with consistent use of antioxidants in the product formulas. Two Gel Cleansers contain different levels of alpha hydroxy acid; other products in the line, such as the Gel Masque, offer a rich mix of botanicals. Antioxidant vitamins are used throughout. Contact: 800/272-1716; www.biojouvance.com.

Biodroga Systems The Puran Formula System for Impure Problem Skin consists of Cleansing Emulsion, Purifying Lotion, Regulating Crèmes I and II, Day Crème Tinted and Covering Stick. Ingredients include zinc, allantoin, licorice and salicylic acid. Contact: 800/972-5016; www.biodroga.com.

BiON offers an extensive range of products for acne vulgaris, cystic acne, acne rosacea and folliculitis barbae. These include several formulations of cleansers, follicle-clearing products, masks and specialty treatments. Active ingredients include salicylic acid, green tea and aloe vera. Contact: 858/715-0205; www.bion-research.com.



Courtesy, Silhouet-Tone

Soli-Tone recommends 12 treatments over a four-week period. The client rests comfortably for each treatment.

One PDT patient was completely clear after one series of treatments.

tetracycline for seven years and yet continued to have outbreaks, was completely clear after one series of PDT treatments. “The results are far and away beyond my expectations,” says Rivkin. “Lasers will continue to play an increasingly important role in the treatment of acne.”

LED Devices

In July 2003, Alderm LLC received FDA approval for the first LED System to treat acne. The OmniLu light-emitting diode used a panel of LEDs to deliver pure blue light (415 nm) to the skin. LED devices have come a long way in the 18 months since that begin-

ning. PDT using wavelengths in the visible spectrum have proven effective for a wide range of dermatologic problems, including acne.

“Unlike the early devices, which used only blue light or red light, Soli-Tone uses four color wavelengths from the visible spectrum,” says Danielle Tsoklis, director of education, Silhouet-Tone USA. “During the year and a half we tested the device before bringing it to market, we discovered that using multiple colors produced a better effect. Different wavelengths affect the skin in different ways. While blue light reacts with a metabolic byproduct of *P. acne* to produce singlet oxygen, which then kills the bacteria, red light has an anti-inflammatory effect and speeds healing. Yellow light increases lymphatic flow to evacuate waste products, and green light decreases melanin production, reduces pigmentation and helps eliminate redness.”

Soli-Tone LumiFacial treatments are recommended for clients with mild to moderate acne. The recommended initial treatment regimen is 10 sessions, twice each week for five weeks, then one per month as maintenance.

Candela Corp. offers the Smoothbeam Laser. Contact them via www.candelalaser.com.

Charme, a division of Mikuni American Corp. offers the Charme Skincare System. Contact: 888/505-7975; www.charmerenew.com.

Control Corrective Skincare (distributed by Universal Companies) This company's Acne/Oily Skin line seeks to address skin surface buildup while purifying, normalizing and disinfecting skin. There are more than 20 products available for this skin type and they feature the active ingredients benzoyl peroxide, salicylic and alpha hydroxy acids, sulfur and retinol. Contact: 800/558-5571; www.controlcorrective.com; www.universalcompanies.com.

DDF takes the approach that acne is primarily caused by hormones and genes. To counteract these inevitabilities, it offers several cleansers—Salicylic Wash, Blemish Foaming Cleanser, Pumice Acne and Medicated Skin Cleanser (containing 5% benzoyl peroxide). A Sulfur Therapeutic Mask, Spot Treatment and

BP Gel 5% with Tea Tree Oil round out the mix. Contact: 914/378-0200; www.ddfskincare.com.

Dermalogica The company's acne-prone product series looks to control oil without drying out the skin. Triclosan, salicylic acid and aloe vera work together to accomplish this. Products include: Anti-Bac Skin Wash, Multi-Active Toner, Oil Control Lotion, Medicated Clearing Gel, Gentle Cream Exfoliant and Anti-Bac Cooling Masque. Contact: 800/611-SKIN; www.dermalogica.com.

Dermapro offers an acne healing cream containing benzoyl peroxide 6%, vitamins K and E, aloe vera and green tea. Contact: 866/387-1241; www.dermapro.com.

DermaQuest Skin Therapy relies upon the proven power of benzoyl peroxide for its Acne Therapeutic Line but has combined it with ingredients like tea tree oil to minimize any harsh effects. Products include Azalaic Acid Cream, Clarifying Acne Mask, Acne Pads, Blemish Gel, Facial Scrub and Enzyme Cleanser. Contact: 800/213-8100; www.skintherapydq.com.

LumiFacial treatments can also target hyperpigmentation, redness and photoaging.

“Lasers create thermal damage to help control acne; light simply triggers skin cells to repair what’s wrong,” says Tsoklis. “Effectiveness of the acne treatments range from completely clear skin to moderate improvement, depending on the type of acne, lifestyle considerations and home care. The reaction from clients is wonderful. We’ve never had such high satisfaction ratings from our customers.”

Another machine from Canada, the Max7 LED system from Flip4, features seven preprogrammed polychromatic treatments, ranging in wavelengths from 400 to 700 nm. The specific treatment for acne works with four specific wavelengths—violet, green, red and yellow—to destroy acne-causing bacteria. Some patients report significant improvements after only two or three sessions, but the company recommends 12 treatments over a four-week period.

“We have added Max7 to our Acne Solution Treatment, which incorporates our Rose de Mer herbs to slough and resolve acne lesions, encouraging circulation and oxygen to fight bacteria. Extractions are followed by a clinical spray of oxygen and then Max7 is used on the moist skin surface for 20 minutes to further reduce bacteria and help with skin

DermaSound is distributed in the U.S. by Glymed Plus.

Contact: 800/676-9667; www.glymedplus.com.

Dermazone Solutions The company’s key acne line, O*Plex is named after its key ingredient, Complex Origanum, distilled from fresh oregano. The Acne Treatment System, consisting of O*Plex Wash, Mist and Control controls sebum without drying or irritating skin. Contact: 800/253-5115; www.dermazone.com.

Dr. Irena Eris has created its Pharmaceris line especially for oily and acne-prone skin. A natural approach is evident in the ingredients, which include burdock extract, zinc, biotin, extract from the African tamarind tree, azaleic acid, allantoin, almond oil, cucumber juice and algae extract. The line consists of Gentle Foam Cleanser; Salicam Anti-Acne Mask; Octopirox Cream Treatment; Sebostatic Cream; Body Balm and Cleansing Body Gel. Contact: 800/999-9419; www.iris.pl.

Echo2 offers its Oxyceuticals Acne Treatment System in professional and home versions. The system combines salicylic acid, lactic acid and pure oxygen with aloe vera, licorice, witch hazel and tea tree oil. The line includes a cleanser, medicated exfoliating astringent, UV protector and oxygen-enriched calming lotion. Contact: 800/592-3246; www.echo2plus.com.

Edge Systems offers the UltraMax Ultrasonic Skincare System. Contact: 800/603-4996; www.edgesystem.net.



During treatments which last 31 minutes, the patient lies comfortably while the Max7 illuminates the acne, causing the acne bacteria to self-destruct, while having no effect on the normal skin. Protective eyewear is used during all LED treatment.

sensitivity,” says Bella Schneider, founder and CEO of LaBelle Day Spas & Salons. “Clients have been extremely happy with the results, reporting that they have seen significantly less redness and hyperpigmentation in their skin.”

There are a host of new LED devices hitting the spa market, including the MediLite from Inner ACT, Revitalight from Skincare Systems and Dermajoule from Bella Products. All of our experts noted that, as with any new technology, it's important to purchase with care. “The most important consideration is the reputation of the company behind the

Equibal/The Body Perfect offers its extensive Blemfree line for face and body. Chamomile and goldenseal are used throughout the line; Triclosan appears in the spot controlling product. The line includes: Foaming Scrub & Beads; Mineral Clay Mask; All Day Lotion; Overnight Cream; Toner/Balancer; Blemish Relief; Deep Cleansing Peel Mask; Body Splash. Contact: 800/247-2405; www.thebodyperfect.com.

Europro Equipment LLC offers three types of equipment to address acne. The Cold Laser uses targeted laser light and electrical energy. The Dreamlight LED device addresses acne as well as hyperpigmentation and rosacea. The Dealight uses intense pulsed light technology that can be precisely customized to the patient's needs. Contact: 800/272-1716; www.europroequipment.biz.

5 Star Formulators turns to its Christina line to offer the Comodex A.C.N.E. Take-Home Method. Products containing anti-oxidants such as vitamins A, B and C plus alpha hydroxy acids include Cleansing Gel; Day Treatment; Night Treatment; Drying Gel. Contact: 888/200-3977; www.5starformulators.com.

Flip4 offers the Max7 LED system. Contact: 450/649-4244; www.flip4.ca.

GlyMed Plus The company offers a wide selection of acne-fighting products in increasing grades depending on severity.

The Serious Action Masque pairs ancient herbs and tea tree extract with salicylic acid. The similarly formulated NOONER wipes help clients on the go. The take-home Action Pac ranges in formulation, using benzoyl peroxide and salicylic with natural ingredients in varying degrees. Contact: 800/676-9667; www.glymedplus.com.

Hormeta The Oily and Acneic Skin Line introduces hydration while it controls sebum, using a unique delivery system. Tea tree oil is introduced in cyclodextrins, molecules that allow for a gradual release for optimize penetration in the skin. The emptied cyclodextrins then absorb excess sebum. Other key ingredients in the Anti-Shine Day Cream, Fluid Cream and Mattifying Serum include fennel extract, a mineral complex and glycolic acid. Contact: 888/435-5022; www.hormetausa.com.

Inner ACT MediLite LED device mixes red and blue wavelengths to offer computerized treatments for acne and other skincare problems. Contact: 888/212-6342; www.inneractproducts.com.

IntaglioSkin offers a AHA Glycolic Acid Treatment containing 8% AHA glycolic acid and 2% salicylic acid to optimize oil reduction and exfoliation while keeping follicles open and controlling bacteria. Products include an astringent, antiseptic exfoliant, resurfacing gel, vitamin A emollient and day lotion. Contact: 800/227-2220; www.Intaglioskin.com.

product,” notes Tsoklis. “You can’t judge the strength and purity of the light just by looking.” [We’ll have more about these devices and their multitude of uses in the May issue. -Ed.]

Ultrasonic Devices

“In the spa environment, the most effective clinical treatment for acne, hands down, is the DermaSound ultrasonic treatment and GlyMed Plus acne products,” says Christine Heathman, president of Glymed Plus, U.S. distributor for DermaSound. “The DermaSound works on the same principle as the SonaCare toothbrush. You can actually see the sound waves working to force the oil out of the sebaceous follicle. The blade of the unit moves back and forth in a ‘peeling’ motion, causing pressure to build up around the sebaceous gland, squeezing the sebum and its bacteria to the surface where it is punctured and killed.”

Heathman says the DermaSound also has an anti-inflammatory effect, but they are still working to discover the mechanism behind this action. The treatment is also gentle and calming, and increases the effectiveness of any skincare preparations used.

“I’ve been so impressed with the results achieved with the DermaSound in the spas we work with, and our firsthand experience has been confirmed in a clinical study,” says Heathman. Merrit M. DeBartolo and H. M. DeBartolo, Jr., M.D., J.D., a practicing plastic surgeon in Chicago, studied 1,000 patients, utilizing split-face and matched pairs to test the effect of the DermaSound D₂O and distilled water ultrasound media. Acne patients showed 98% improvement.



**Adding elec-
trolled water
systems like
Charme to
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treatments.**

Courtesy Charme

Low pH Water Device

One device, Charme from Mikuni American Corp., bridges the gap between the treatment room and home care for acne vulgaris. In a 2004 clinical study sponsored by the Mikuni Corp. and published in the February 2004 issue of *Cosmetic Dermatology*, a test group used the Charme Skincare System, which delivers a 40-micron mist of low pH acidic water through electrolysis, over an eight-week period on only one side of the face. An impressive 100% of participants showed an improvement of 25% or more by week eight, with 75% indicating they preferred the system to traditional topical medications.

Low pH water has been used in the treatment of skin conditions including psoriasis, eczema and rosacea. It acts as an astringent by tightening the skin and improving barrier function. It has been used worldwide for disinfection purposes in many industries.

The study concluded: "Charme is most effective in combating inflammatory acne and is, therefore, a possible alternative to oral/topical antibiotics in the management of this condition."

Adding electrolyzed water systems like Charme to your spa allows you to offer clients a totally new realm of

Jan Marini Skin Research uses glycolic acid as its primary weapon against acne in its Bioglycolic Line. The principle is based on this ingredient's ability to loosen "glue-like" attachments that are characteristics of skin conditions like acne. The line includes a cleansing gel, facial lotion with and without SPF and acne gels in two levels, both containing salicylic in addition to the glycolic acid. Contact: 800/347-2223; www.janmarini.com.

Joey New York clears things up and cools them down with its Pure Pore line of products containing salicylic acid, vitamin C, camphor, eucalyptus, menthol, peppermint oil, titanium dioxide and sulfur. The line includes a Blackhead Remove and Pore Minimizer Gel; Cleansing Gel; Oil-Free Moisturizer, Crushed Almonds and Honey Scrub; Chin Breakout Relief and more. Contact: 800/563-9691; www.joeynewyork.com.

Mark Lees Skin Care recommends its take-home protocol containing sulfur, salicylic acid, glycolic, resorcinol and benzoyl peroxide. The extensive line includes cleanser, toners, hydrators, masks and spot treatments for morning and night use. Contact: 800/447-5770, www.marklees.com.

Medicalia The Medi-Clear line of products contains salicylic, azelaic, glycolic and lactic acid along with fennel oil and chamomile to soothe. It's available in Levels I or II depending on severity, and includes cleanser, toner, cream, spot

treatment and acid-gel (for Level II only). Contact: 866/314-1975; www.medicalia.com.

M'lis uses a total body approach to treat acne that encourages clients to detoxify their systems through improved diet, hydration, exercise and supplements in addition to receiving professional treatments. The company's natural renewal skin-care philosophy includes an Acne Program designed to detoxify and nourish the skin. Contact: 800/548-0569; www.mliscountry.com.

Murad The company's latest offering in the acne treatment arena is its Acne Complex Kit, which represents its current approach toward focusing on the inflammatory aspects of the disorder. Triclosan, glycolic and salicylic acids, retinol and arnica are found in the line that includes Clarifying Cleanser; Exfoliating Acne Treatment Gel; Acne Spot Treatment; and Skin Perfecting Lotion. Additional products beyond the kit are available. On the professional level, the Clarifying Enzyme Facial uses natural, effective anti-inflammatory agents to address acne. Contact: 800/242-1103; www.murad.com.

Nelly De Vuyst Among the company's Corrective Treatment Lines is one that seeks to arrest acne with a soothing, purifying approach. Yeast extract, B-glucan, St. John's Wort, chamomile, lavender, sage; and hazelnut, apricot, lemon and calendula oils are all components in this system. Contact: 800/633-6056; www.ndvusa.com.

antimicrobial and hydrating service treatments and retail the affordable devices for home care.

Product-Based Approaches

Today's product-based approaches to treating acne are based on a broader knowledge base, and while they don't outright reject conventional treatments, they do recognize the flaws in some of the methods used years ago. Underlying all of these approaches is the commonsense understanding that has not changed: To be healthy, skin and pores must be kept clean, and skin needs to be exfoliated, hydrated and protected from the effects of the sun. Also, it's understood that one essential aspect of treating acne is the client's cooperation in following properly prescribed home care. The role of the skincare professional is two-fold: to administer treatments, and to educate and guide his/her acne clients in the ongoing control of their condition.

Approach #1: Whole Body Thinking. What should a professional take into consideration when trying to arrest a case of acne? "I like to look at everything—age, stress level, hormones, even make-up use," says Dr. Mark Lees, president and product developer for Mark Lees Skin Care. "I call it a 'whole-istic' approach. Let's face it, if you only treat the acne spots and nothing else, you won't get anywhere."

Often included in this approach are dietary considera-

Courtesy GlyMed Plus



tions in which possible nutritional deficiencies and allergies are considered. A skincare professional might counsel a client to eliminate or reduce foods shown to

This woman's grade III acne was cleared after three months of Glymed Plus' Serious Action Acne product use, plus in-clinic treatments. The woman then quit her job as an x-ray technician—to become an esthetician!

stimulate sebaceous glands and to increase foods containing vitamin A. Supplements to benefit the skin have become staples in some skincare regimens. Murad, Inc. reports great results with acne clients who used its Pure Skin Clarifying Supplement, which contains high levels of vitamin A, beta carotene and vitamins B-1 through B-6 among many other ingredients. "We saw a 55% reduction in lesions in just six weeks," states Dr. Howard Murad, founder.

M'Lis is committed to the whole-body approach, and has developed its entire acne program around the importance of detoxification, hydration, dietary modification, supplementation and exercise, in addition to professional and homecare treatments. The company's Essential Fatty Acid supplement contains evening primrose oil and organic flax seed oil to heal the skin. And Heathman of GlyMed Plus believes that antioxidants taken in supplement form help to "build the skin from within to produce healthy connective tissue." The company's Body Smart line of nutritionals includes an Acne Formula supplement that contains zinc and vitamins E and C.

Approach #2: Smart Formulations. Many of today's acne products are based on proven ideas about arresting the spread of bacteria and controlling the overproduction

Palomar Medical Technologies offers intense-pulsed light lasers. Contact: 800/PALOMAR; www.palomarmedical.com.

Phytomer recommends its OligoPur line for acneic conditions. An enzymatic exfoliant, algae extract, Ac phycosaccharide and panthenol head up the arsenal of ingredients in this line, which include cleansing, toning and anti-blemish gels, mask, serum, moisturizer and emulsion. Contact: 800/227-8051; www.phytomer.com.

Repêchage offers a European Acne Facial professional treatment and home care that includes a Clear Complexion Drying Lotion with organic sulfur, camphor and zinc oxide.

Silhouet-Tone offers the Soli-Tone LED skincare system. Contact: 800/552-0418; www.silhouet-tone.com.

Skin Blends offers a Clear Skin home care system that relies upon benzoyl peroxide in varying degrees along with alpha and beta hydroxy acids to cleanse and clear acneic skin. A mask of sulfur, bentonite, kaolin and zinc oxide heals while a serum containing sulfur, zinc, willowbark, yeast green tea and botanicals controls and calms. A 1% hydrocortisone lotion counteract the harsh effect of repeated benzoyl peroxide use. Contact: 877/754-6253; www.skinblends.com.

Skin Sense's Oxygen Botanicals products are formulated with plant-based collagen, elastin and vitamins to coax the skin into its natural, healthiest state. Unwanted bacteria and inflammation is challenged with chamomile, echinacea,

eucalyptus, gotu kola, green tea and meadowsweet. Contact: 877/818-8877; www.skincareinfo.com.

Sothys Maintain: Correcting Professional Treatment treats acneic clients with active plant ingredients, almond proteins, licorice extract and menthol. The company's home care regimen includes: Sebum Regulating Institute Treatment; Hydramatt Fluid; Active Cream; Absorbent Mask; and Oil-Control Serum. Contact: 800/325-0503; www.sothys-usa.com.

Thalgo discourages sebum production with its Re-Balancing Skin Treatment line containing laminaria seaweed extract, which inhibits the activity of the enzyme responsible for the hormonal reaction that causes seborrhea: pam extract, a natural extract of grapefruit seed; burdock extract, vitamin B8, zinc salts; and other active ingredients formulated to act on hyperkeratinization. The line includes Ultra-Matte Moisturizing Fluid; Intense Regulating Serum; Deep-Cleansing Absorbent Mask; and Thalgotermyl Purifying Extracts. Contact: 800/228-4254 (East); 800/GO-THALGO (West); www.thalgo.com.

Yon-Ka taps Mother Nature in providing three acne products containing essential oils and herbal extracts to calm, balance, heal and aseptify. They are Juvenil (with ichthiol), Emulsion Pure and the purifying Crème 15. Contact: 800/533-6276; www.YonKaUSA.com.

of sebum. However, they do the job in a more sophisticated manner, taking into account considerations like effectiveness of delivery and proper combining of ingredients. “An ingredient can help or harm depending on the base of the product,” points out Dr. Lees. “Always ask, ‘What is it floating in?’”

Most experts agree that sebum-controlling ingredients such as salicylic acid, alpha-hydroxy acid and benzoyl peroxide still belong in today’s acne products. However, some would like to see these used differently. “Ingredients that do work for acne are known agents that need to be reconfigured in their physical/chemical structures, hosted in advanced emulsions, adjusted in their concentrations and delivered in an improved manner,” says Dr. Christian Jurist, Medicalia. “Some examples of these are *spherulites*—a delivery technology in which ingredients are time-released into the skin—and advanced tri-phase microemulsions, which offer better product stability and penetration.”

Dr. Lees relies on a “good follicular exfoliant” along with staples such as salicylic acid and benzoyl peroxide. However, there is a caveat: “I’ll only reach for the benzoyl peroxide



Courtesy Mark Lees Skin Care

when there’s bacterial acne with pustules, and even then, I don’t use it for long because it’s a free radical,” he warns. Heathman also supports use of these ingredients, but notes the importance of hydration in the treatment mix. “Hyaluronic acid is a natural substance of our skin needed for healthy cell proliferation and recovery from

trauma such as acne,” she says. GlyMed’s treatment protocol includes Hydro Gel HA, a formula extracted from pure plant sources to help feed the skin.

A consistent night and day home care regimen often does the trick—but requires compliance and patience from the client.

“The newer trends are definitely less aggressive and more natural in approach.”



Courtesy Murad

Murad's approach seeks to address the inflammatory nature of acne with calming ingredients along with conventional ones.

Dr. Jurist reminds skincare professionals that antibiotics are not the only resource for fighting microbes. “Antiseptics in product formulas work very well; some keratolytic agents have proven effective for decades,” he points out. “When ingredients like these are included in not just one, but several products in a regimen of skin care, great results are observed—without the feared side effects of some prescriptions.”

Approach #3: Fighting Inflammation. “The main problem with acne is the red bumps,” states Dr. Murad. “We may as well call it ‘red bump disease.’” Murad recommends a comprehensive regimen of home care, professional care and supplementation—all with an anti-inflammatory emphasis. “Traditional treatments such as salicylic acid and vitamin A are good but, beyond that, we need to soothe and calm with ingredients like chamomile, licorice, aloe vera and arnica, among many others,” he says.

For professional treatment, Murad reminds estheticians to use extra care with acneic clients, especially when administering exfoliation. “It’s necessary to remove the

extra stratum corneum but the exfoliation needs to be gentle. Professional AHA treatments and enzyme treatments that also reduce inflammation are good,” he advises. “At our spa we use lots of anti-irritants in facial treatments for these clients.”

Another logical reason for the anti-inflammatory approach is that a condition that appears to be acne may actually be another condition that’s also characterized by redness and inflammation. “People may say they have acne when they don’t,” notes Dr. Murad. “They may have folliculitis or eczema.” These people are likely to respond best to an anti-inflammatory approach.

While treating acneic clients with gentle, healing methods, make sure they don’t stray from their regimen to “try something stronger.” This can re-trigger the inflammatory process and, over time, do serious harm. “The use of strong, irritating inflammatory agents and procedures can actually weaken the skin’s natural healing mechanism,” points out Dr. Jurist. “The newer trends are definitely less aggressive and more natural—holistic—in the approach to this disorder.” ♦

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