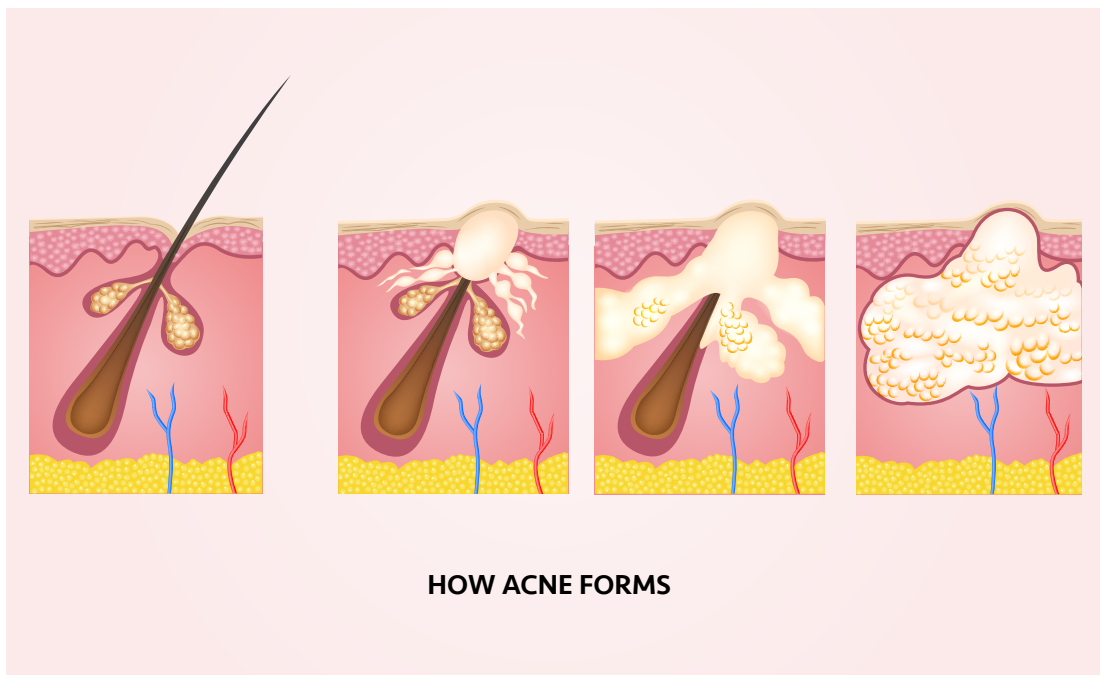




Acne in children

Acne is a skin condition. With acne you get pimples. The pimples can be whiteheads, blackheads, or raised red ones that hurt. Acne can pop up on the shoulders, back, neck, and face. Acne mostly occurs in teenagers and young adults. Many people still have acne or acne scars when they are adults.



You get acne when the glands under your skin make a certain kind of oil. The oil ducts get clogged and mix with bacteria on the skin. Then bumps pop up on the skin.

Babies 2 to 4 weeks old can get a little acne from their mother's hormones.

These things help cause acne or make it worse:

- Hormone changes in teenagers
- A girl's hormones before her period or when she is pregnant
- Heavy lotions or oil-based makeup
- Stress
- Vitamin pills that have iodine
- Some medicines, such as steroids, and lithium

Chocolate, nuts, greasy foods, and cola do not cause acne. But notice if any food or beverage seems to trigger a breakout, and notice if avoiding that food or beverage for a week makes a difference.



Self-care can treat mild acne. When this is not enough, your child's doctor can prescribe special creams, lotions, gels, or liquids. Ask the doctor for advice. Don't do anything special for a baby's acne. Just wash the skin gently.



TRIAGE QUESTIONS



With the acne, are there signs of infection, such as fever and swelling?

NO

YES ➔ **SEE DOCTOR**



Does the acne cause scars and/or a lot of emotional problems?

NO

YES ➔ **SEE DOCTOR**



Is the acne very bad or are the pimples big and painful?

NO

YES ➔ **SEE DOCTOR**



Have you tried self-care, and it doesn't help?

NO

YES ➔ **CALL DOCTOR**



Does self-care make the skin worse?

NO

YES ➔ **CALL DOCTOR**



USE SELF-CARE



**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**
[medlineplus.gov](https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)



SELF-CARE

- Keep the skin clean. Wash often with plain soap and water. Use a washcloth. Work the soap into the skin gently for a minute or two. Rinse well. Don't scrub.
- Have your child use a clean washcloth every day. Bacteria grow on a wet washcloth, and they can cause more pimples.
- Have your child try an astringent lotion, degreasing pads, or a face scrub.
- Ask your child's doctor to recommend an acne soap to try.
- Tell your child not to squeeze, scratch, or poke at pimples. They can get infected and leave scars.
- Avoid touching the face as much as possible.
- Buy a lotion, cream, or soap that has benzoyl peroxide. (Some people are allergic to benzoyl peroxide. Try a little on arm first to make sure it doesn't hurt the skin.)
- Have your child wash after he or she exercises and sweats.
- Have your child wash his or her hair at least every other day. It may help to avoid hair care products with a lot of oil.
- Have your child use only water-based makeup. Don't let him or her use greasy or oily creams, lotions, or makeup or leave makeup on overnight.
- Don't let your child spend too much time in the sun or use a sun lamp. Some acne medicines can make skin more sun sensitive.