

THE BEAUTY EXPERT

# allure

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## 41 Secrets Of Top Beauty Pros

A-Diet Tricks for the Best  
Haircuts, Skin Treatments,  
Nail Colors, and More

## HAPPY MAKEUP

8 Sunny New Colors

BACKSTAGE AT THE OSCARS

The Ultimate  
CELEBRITY  
MAKEUP KIT

## Mila Kunis

Lets Loose on Fame,  
Beauty, and Her  
Rumored Love Life

### HOW TO:

- Stop Procrastinating
- Prevent Breakouts
- Make Lip Color Last
- Pull Off the Perfect Surprise Party

# Beauty 101

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read credits*

## Acne Fighters

Top dermatologists reveal  
how to annihilate any  
form of acne in a matter  
of days—or even hours.

By Hannah Morrill

**I**f acne had an online dating profile, it would look pretty appealing. First of all, it's not afraid of commitment. The pimples that followed you through high school can still make an appearance well into your 30s. Acne is also forgiving. You can blast it with medicated creams, face washes, or masks, but it will keep coming back for more. "Even after pimples subside, the fire isn't totally out," says New York City dermatologist Joshua

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Zeichner. "Acne patients are ultra-vulnerable to future breakouts." And boy, does acne have a way with women. In a recent study, researchers at Harvard Medical School surveyed the skin of almost 3,000 females ages 10 to 70 and found that over half of them, no matter their age, get acne. That's

because hormone fluctuations resulting from menstruation or stress boost oil production, which clogs pores. The good news? While acne may be persistent, it's not like you have to marry it. The right products, treatments, and skin-care routine can help your complexion remain happily independent of zits.

## How to Get Clear Skin

Tap the tabs below to learn to erase little black bumps, huge red honkers, and more.

### Acne Treatments

### Unclogging Your Pores

### Covering Up

### Acne Myths, Busted

If you see: **Red bumps with a white surface**

**They're probably caused by:** Underexfoliating. When dead skin cells collect on the surface of the skin and block pores, oil and sebum balloon up, and a whitehead forms.

**The fix:** Treat the spot with a 2 percent salicylic acid product, such as Clean & Clear Advantage Acne Spot Treatment, twice a day. Resist the urge to squeeze, as it will cause bad things to happen: swelling, infection, and likely a scar ([drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com)).

**Next time:** Wash daily using a cleanser with 0.5 percent salicylic acid, such as Aveeno Clear Complexion Foaming Cleanser, which lightly exfoliates. If you feel a zit brewing, dab on an antibacterial gel, like DDF Benzoyl Peroxide Gel, to prevent inflammation (Aveeno, [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com); [ddfskincare.com](http://ddfskincare.com)).

If you see: **Hard, red cysts**

**They're probably caused by:** Excessive oil production, which can be triggered by hormonal shifts or stress.

**The fix:** Hold an ice cube on the blemish to reduce swelling. Then dab on a 2.5 percent benzoyl peroxide product to kill bacteria and dry out the area. If it's a real honker, apply cortisone cream a couple of times a day. "The pimple should be gone in about 24 hours," says New York City dermatologist Diane Berson. Limit this solution to once a month; the ingredients are too irritating for regular use.

**Next time:** "If you get regular flare-ups, see a doctor," says Boston dermatologist Emory Graber. She can recommend solutions such as birth control pills, anti-androgen medications like spironolactone, and oral antibiotics like minocycline, which help to level out hormonal fluctuations.

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The desire to obliterate acne often goes hand in hand with the desire to obliterate blackheads (those tiny black dots caused by clogged oil and debris that has oxidized and darkened within the pores). Here's how to carry out a thorough unclogging without the red aftermath.

• **Start with a scrub.** Step one is to break down the sebum that gets stuck in the pores and causes the blackhead. Use a 2 percent or less salicylic acid exfoliator every morning. Let it sit for about a minute on damp skin (this is important because the acid needs time to work), then rinse. We like Olay Pore Minimizing Cleanser & Scrub ([olay.com](http://olay.com)).

• **Extract them.** Yes, you can go after these suckers at home. But don't even think about using your fingers to do it. After you shower (while skin is still damp), hold a cotton swab on either side of the blackhead, then gently press down. If it doesn't budge, don't force it. Abort mission and apply a benzoyl peroxide spot treatment.

• **Grab the vacuum.** Everything about the Bliss Pore-Factor Gadget—right down to the name—sounds a bit gimmicky. Until you use it. The metal device loosens dirt and oil with sonic vibrations so you can gently scoop away the gunk with the edge. Similarly, the new Rodan + Fields Macro Exfoliator uses gentle suction to remove dead skin cells, dirt, and oil ([blissworld.com](http://blissworld.com); [rodanandfields.com](http://rodanandfields.com)).

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### You Feel It Coming

To reduce the size and redness of an emerging zit, **Matin Maulawizada**, a makeup artist for **Laura Mercier**, presses on it with a cotton swab soaked in witch hazel on one end, and eye drops containing a gentle anti-inflammatory, like **Visine Maximum Redness Relief Formula**, on the other. Some medicated cover-ups actually improve acne. **Mark Save the Day Anti-Acne Concealer Stick**, with 2 percent salicylic acid, is ideal, since cover-up can look gunky when layered over spot treatments (**Visine**, [drugstore.com](http://drugstore.com); **meetmark.com**).

### When It Arrives

A raised pimple can cast a shadow, so start by brushing on a mattifying silicone primer, like **Smashbox Anti-Shine**, before applying your foundation. Dab on an opaque,

full-coverage concealer (**Chanel** makeup artist **Rachel Goodwin** likes **Kevyn Aucoin The Sensual Skin Enhancer**). Set with loose translucent powder (**smashbox.com**; **Kevyn Aucoin**, [bergdorfgoodman.com](http://bergdorfgoodman.com)).

### Oops, You Picked It

Dab the area with witch hazel to disinfect. Dust with loose powder, then top it with a sticky concealer containing salicylic acid, such as **Murad Acne Treatment Concealer**. Build thin layers of coverage by repeating steps two and three. If the area is scaly, remove dead cells with a sonic face brush or an exfoliator, like **SkinCeuticals Micro-Exfoliating Scrub**. Apply an antibiotic salve, like **Neosporin**, and follow the steps above, skipping powder, which can cling to dry patches ([murad.com](http://murad.com); [skinceuticals.com](http://skinceuticals.com); **Neosporin**, [soap.com](http://soap.com)).

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Does junk food or sleeping in your makeup really cause breakouts? We separate fact from fiction.

**1** **Going to bed without washing your face leads to breakouts.**  
We can't blame everything on dirt. While it's true that it worsens acne, dysfunctional cells—those that don't slough away readily or that produce too much sebum—are the root of acne.

**2** **Cheeseburgers cause breakouts.**  
This one is kind of true, but the burger isn't the problem. It's the cheese and the bun. Studies show that diets rich in dairy and high-glycemic foods (white carbs such as flour, rice, and potatoes) correspond with acne occurrence. Loading up on foods with low-glycemic ratings (legumes, whole grains, fruits, vegetables) has been shown to clear up breakouts.

**3** **Prescription products are better than over-the-counter ones.**  
They're similar, only stronger (which isn't always better). If over-the-counter cleansers, retinoids, and spot treatments don't help alleviate breakouts after eight weeks, see a dermatologist, who can offer nonirritating solutions.

**4** **Toothpaste can double as zit cream.** This myth persists no matter how many times we debunk it. The baking soda, hydrogen peroxide, alcohol, menthol, and triclosan found in toothpaste do dry up excess oil, but the harsh combination of ingredients causes peeling and irritation. If you're looking for a guerilla solution, crush a tablet of aspirin, add a drop of water, and apply it to the pimple overnight. It's a powerful but gentle anti-inflammatory.