



Tamara Double

Adult Female Acne - The spots that won't go away

At Skin Solutions I treat a wide range of problematic skin conditions in men and women of all ages. One of the most persistent and distressing of these to the sufferer is the so-called "adult female acne", which also seems to be very common. Although the condition can begin as teenage acne it often occurs in young women in their twenties with a previously clear skin and can continue to cause misery into their fifties, leaving women with inflamed, scar-coarsened skin with enlarged and clogged pores for most of their adult life. The main problem area is usually the chin and jawline, with continuous congestion just below the corners of the mouth and regular break-outs of spots half way through the menstrual cycle - which is why I call it the "hormonal chin". In fact, all acne is stimulated by the hormone testosterone and can be exacerbated by a number of other factors, including nutritional deficiencies; poor digestion and detoxification; inappropriate skincare products and stress. In women, the continuous hormonal fluctuations of the menstrual cycle evidently add to the problem and long-term stress also seems to be a key factor, in that it leads to an overload of toxins in the body and upsets the hormonal balance. So, what can be done? The medical treatment of acne is traditionally with antibiotics, which effectively kills acne bacteria and reduces inflammation. But this does not address the over-production of dead skin cells and sebum which block the pores, and long-term oral use kills the friendly bacteria in the gut, which can lead to digestive problems and further skin problems. For women, the contraceptive pill is often prescribed successfully to suppress testosterone, but only for a limited time due to side-effects. The best results are achieved over several months with a multi-level approach. In addition to the medical treatments, I believe it is important to treat the skin daily with scientifically formulated skincare products containing sufficient amounts of certain nutrients

to correct and heal - primarily vitamin A, plus niacinamide (B3), zinc, plant oestrogens, and a cocktail of anti-oxidants, as well as hydroxy acids to exfoliate and prevent pore clogging, and mineral UVA sun protection to minimise further damage. A course of mild to medium medical aesthetic peels greatly enhances the results. Also very beneficial is a diet high in organic fruits and vegetables; fish, nuts and seeds; whole grains and pulses - soya products contain plant oestrogens which help to balance hormones - and plenty of water. Additional vitamin and mineral supplementation can also be beneficial. All stimulants - including caffeine, sugar, chocolate and alcohol - should be kept to an absolute minimum as well as saturated fats, artificial sweeteners and additives. Smoking asphyxiates the skin and leads to deep congestion. On the other hand, exercise oxygenates the skin and helps to alleviate stress. The skin can be a window to the state of our inner health. To combat skin problems we must look at the whole person.

For help with adult female acne and other common skin problems you can contact Tamara at Skin Solutions on 01865 749095