

LOCAL HEALTH TALK

# Rosacea

Summer is upon us. And with that, it is appropriate to discuss another skin disease that is worsened by excessive heat and sun. Rosacea is a common condition which starts as a tendency to flush or blush easily. It eventually leads to persistent redness on the face, with later appearance of small blood vessels. It is often referred to as adult acne, as red bumps and pustules may appear, but without any blackheads.

The exact cause of rosacea is unknown, but it is believed to be from a combination of both genetic and environmental factors. The best prevention may be to avoid things that make the face red or flushed such as hot drinks, spicy foods, caffeine, and excessive alcohol. Extremes in hot and cold temperatures and excessive sunlight also exacerbate rosacea. Good sunprotection is imperative. Broad spectrum sunblocks with SPF 15 or higher should be reapplied every 2 hours if one is directly under the hot summer sun for prolonged periods. Physical protection such as wearing hats, and limiting exposure to sunlight itself are optimal. It's important to eliminate factors that cause additional skin irritation. The face should not be scrubbed or massaged, and only mild non irritating cleansers



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and cosmetics should be used. Daily facial products such as soap, moisturizers, and sunscreens should be free of alcohol or other irritating ingredients. Green tinted makeup may actually mask the underlying redness.

Currently there is no cure for rosacea, but dermatologists may recommend a combination of treatments that can stop the progress of rosacea and sometimes reverse it. Prescription gels and creams may be prescribed with improvement usually noticed in two months. Sometimes, oral antibiotics are used for faster resolution of more severely inflamed cases. Persistent underlying redness and visible blood vessels are best eradicated with laser treatment. Laser treatments are best able to target specific blood vessels without causing damage to surrounding skin structures.

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