EDITORIAL

ACNE: A DERMATOLOGICAL NUISANCE

Acne, a most common dermatological condition, affecting face, especially in teenagers. The exact cause is unknown, however hormonal changes may be a contributing factor. Usually there are two types of acne, a) Non-inflammatory acne characterized by the presence of white heads and blackheads. b) Inflammatory acne-showing pimples, which may rupture to form inflammatory lesion, reddening the areas on the skin called as “pustule”.

Usually both types of acne are exhibited by individual especially in the facial areas, chest and back. Acne may also occur in other areas of the body such as neck and upper arm.

There are many factors that contribute to acne which may be environmental physical or emotional. As an example these factors may include humidity or exposure to dust, physical irritation, from especial type of clothing, hand band, hat, helmet, etc. It may be caused due to premenstrual charges or hormonal changes, stress or anxiety. It may be caused by the use of certain medication such as phenobarbital, phenytoin, isoniazid, lithium, steroid, rifampin and quinine.

Treatment of ache depends on the severity of affection. The first thing is to prevent or minimize the incidence of pimples and prevent scaring. There are many products available in the market which can be purchased over the counter. These can easily minimize the recurrence of pimples. These products are available as cleansing bars, liquids, lotions, creams and gels. They contain usually benzylperoxide, salicylic acid, sulfur, with or without resorcinol and sulfur with sodium sulfacetamide. Benzylperoxide is the most effective and widely used as nonprescription medication for both types of acne. Benzylperoxide kills prepini bacterial acne. This bacteria causes inflammation and helps to remove excess oils from the skin as well as removes dead skin, cells that block pores. Benzylperoxide causes excessive dryness of the skin burning and tingling, special care should be applied to areas near the lips, nose and mouth. Benzylperoxide also causes bleaching and, therefore, it should be avoided to be in touch with skin or clothing.

Another important chemical is salicylic acid which decrease the shedding of cells which provides clogging of pores. This chemical however causes burning, stinging and redness of the skin. As said earlier sulfur treats acne by preventing the grade of P. acne and removes dead skin cells and excess oils. It is after forming in combination with resorcinol or sulfacetamide. Constant use of sulfur causes dryness, redness and skin peeling. Its odor is obnoxious and, therefore, its use is limited, besides chalky yellow color.

After long use, if the acne and the skin does not show any improvement towards cure, a dermatologist should be consulted. Doctor may suggest medication towards improvement. Such medicine which are injurious should be avoided specially during breast feeding. It is advisable to consult a medical doctor before starting self-medication.

Prof. Dr. Syed Riaz Baqar
Editor-In-Chief