



Nutrition for acne

What is acne?

Acne or *acne vulgaris* is a common inflammatory skin condition that occurs when excess oil (known as sebum) is produced within the skin. Acne may be found on the face, chest, upper arms or back and may be painful and produce scarring.

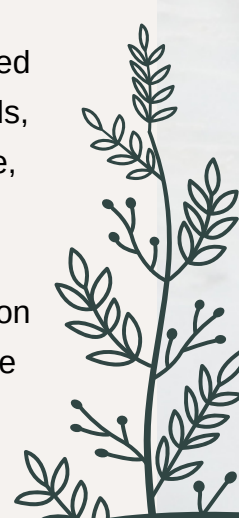
What causes acne?

Acne can have multiple triggers however it is now well understood that there is a bi-directional relationship between the gastrointestinal system and the skin. What we eat and how healthy our gut is, has a significant impact on the integrity of our skin.

If the digestive system is not functioning optimally or is overburdened, this can lead to inflammation and oxidative stress in the body – both major drivers of acne.

The anti-inflammatory diet

The anti-inflammatory diet (AID) is a predominantly plant-based and whole foods diet that incorporates lean meats, nuts, seeds, wholegrains, legumes and healthy fats. Foods such as coffee, alcohol, dairy, red meat, processed and sugary foods are advised to be limited or avoided, to help support optimal digestion and reduce inflammation in the body. As inflammation is a known driver of acne, this diet can be expected to improve acne and reduce inflammation of the skin.



I

Swap processed and sugary foods for low GI foods

Foods that are high in refined sugars elevate insulin levels in the body. Higher amounts of circulating insulin then trigger a rise in androgens (such as testosterone) which is known to increase sebum production and lead to outbreaks of acne. Instead, include more low GI foods such as oats, brown rice, buckwheat, rye barley, quinoa, and wholegrain varieties.

II

Consume 2-3 servings of fish or omega-3 rich foods each week

Adequate consumption of omega-3 fatty acids supports skin integrity, lesion healing and has been shown to be protective against a wide variety of health conditions including acne.

III

Trial a dairy-free diet for 3 - 4 weeks

High milk and ice-cream intake are associated with the development of acne. Milk products increase insulin and insulin-growth like factor, which are known to drive acne.

IV

Support your lymphatic system through dry body brushing and regular daily exercise.

The lymphatic system is a major component of our immune system and acts like a 'street sweeper' within the body - clearing out waste, debris and excess fluids from the cells.

When our lymphatic system becomes sluggish the skin can take on the role of excreting these waste products, leading to acne.

