

Rosacea

Rosacea is a common condition of the skin (affecting up to 10% of the population). It typically affects fair-skinned adults, but can be seen in any skin type and all age ranges. The exact cause of rosacea is unknown, but it is thought that the blood vessels of the face are hyperreactive and this leads to some of the problems that occur. Typically there is redness of the nose and cheeks, but the forehead and chin may also be involved. There are usually some little broken blood vessels (telangiectasias) on the skin. Many people may get acne bumps with their rosacea and this is often called adult acne. Some people will get significant flushing episodes (flares of redness). Rarely, you can get an associated thickening of the skin, most commonly seen on the nose of men. An important association not to miss is involvement of the eyes. Please let your doctor or physician assistant know if you experience sensitivity to light, a gritty feeling in your eyes, frequent styes, or other new eye symptoms.

People will often be able to identify some triggers for their rosacea (things that cause flushing, make the redness worse, or cause more acne bumps). One of the most common triggers is sunlight (ultraviolet light). For this reason, it is extremely important that you wear a sunscreen daily. We recommend a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least a SPF 30 on a daily basis. Other common triggers include temperature hot foods, spicy foods and alcohol. Hot and cold temperatures also tend to make rosacea skin flare. Try to exercise in a cool environment when possible.

People with rosacea often have sensitive skin. Some products may cause itching or burning with application. Many of the topical medications we prescribe may initially cause itching and/ or burning as well. We can usually overcome this with good skin care. We recommend a mild cleanser to wash with daily. Cerave and Cetaphil are both over the counter lines that are gentle for rosacea skin. Cerave AM and PM lotion are excellent over the counter choices for a morning and night moisturizer, respectively. The Cerave products are available for purchase in our office. Elta MD has a moisturizer with SPF and a tint. It is a fantastic sunscreen and the tint helps to cover some redness and even out skin tone. It is also available for purchase at our office and is not available over the counter.

There are several topical prescription medications that work well for rosacea. These tend to help mostly with the acne bumps, but can help the redness as well. The oral medications, typically oral antibiotics, will also help the acne bumps and may be more effective at decreasing the redness. The broken blood vessels (telangiectasias) cannot be effectively treated with topical or oral medications and generally require laser therapy to resolve completely.

If you find that your prescription medication causes stinging or burning with application, temporarily discontinue it. Do continue to wash your face with a mild cleanser (see

above) and use a moisturizing lotion twice a day (see above). Continue this for one week, then try to restart your prescription medication. If you are still unable to tolerate the medication, please call our office.

It will take several weeks to see improvement in your rosacea with your treatment regimen. Please be patient. We will continue to work with you to get you on a regimen that keeps your rosacea under good control. Remember that rosacea is a chronic condition (like diabetes or high blood pressure). You can expect to be on some type of treatment indefinitely.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call our office at 205-682-8022.

For more information, check out these helpful websites:
www.aad.org <<http://www.aad.org>> www.rosacea.org