

Cosmetics for acne: indications and recommendations for an evidence-based approach.

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[G Ital Dermatol Venereol](#). 2015 Feb;150(1):1-11. Epub 2014 Oct 15.

Abstract

AIM:

The aim of this review was to evaluate, by a thorough revision of the literature, the true efficacy of currently available topic and systemic cosmetic acne agents.

METHODS:

The efficacy of currently available cosmetic acne agents has been retrospectively evaluated via thorough revision of the literature on matched electronic databases (PubMed). All retrieved studies, either randomized clinical trials or clinical trials, controlled or uncontrolled were considered.

RESULTS:

Scientific evidence suggests that most cosmetic products for acne may enhance the clinical outcome. Cleansers should be indicated to all acne patients; those containing benzoyl peroxide or azelaic/salicylic acid/triclosan show the best efficacy profile. Sebum-controlling agents containing nicotinamide or zinc acetate may minimize excessive sebum production. Cosmetics with antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory substances such as, respectively, ethyl lactate or phytosphingosine and nicotinamide or resveratrol, may speed acne recovery. Topical corneolytics, including retinaldehyde/glycolic acid or lactic acid, induce a comedolytic effect and may also facilitate skin absorption of topical drugs. Finally, the use of specific moisturizers should be strongly recommended in all acne patients.

CONCLUSION:

Cosmetics, if correctly prescribed, may improve the performance of the therapy, whereas wrong procedures and/or inadequate cosmetics may worsen acne. Cosmetological recommendations may allow clinicians to make informed decisions about the role of various cosmetics and to identify the appropriate indications and precautions. The choice of the most effective product should take into consideration the ongoing pharmacological therapy and acne type/severity as well.