

ROSACEA

What is rosacea?

There are four components to rosacea: flushing/persistent redness, blood vessels, pimples, and thickened skin tissue.

Rosacea usually develops over a long period of time. It often begins as a tendency to flush and blush easily, then progresses to persistent redness of the cheeks, forehead, chin, and nose, or sensitivity to cosmetics. With time, small blood vessels and pimples may appear on and around the reddened area. In more advanced cases, the oil glands enlarge causing an enlarged red nose and puffy cheeks. This is known as rhinophyma and occurs more commonly in men than women.

The eyes can be involved with rosacea. Usually it manifests as dryness and burning of the eyes. If you have rosacea please notify your physician at your next eye exam.

Why am I developing rosacea now?

Those most likely to develop rosacea are fair-skinned adults between the ages of 30 and 50. Most people who get rosacea seem to flush or blush more often than the average person. The exact cause of rosacea is still unknown.

What should I do?

Rosacea is a chronic condition, and that means the symptoms may come and go in cycles and fluctuate in their degree of severity. Controlling the causes of flushing and blushing can help prevent rosacea from getting worse and blood vessels from getting larger. In order to prevent progression try the following:

Rosacea is worsened by sun exposure. Practice good sun protection. You should wear sunscreen every day of the year, even during the winter months. The sun's rays go through windows so we are all exposed to a significant amount of sun each day just driving in our cars. Wear a broad spectrum sunscreen (blocking both UVA and UVB rays). Our practice recommends using a broad spectrum sunscreen containing both titanium and zinc oxide. It is also non-irritating. Use spring water first and apply the sunscreen while your skin is still wet.

- Avoid rubbing, scrubbing or massaging the face. Rubbing will tend to irritate the reddened skin.
- Exercise in a cool environment. Don't overheat. Use a fan. If your face is turning red while you are exercising, consider taking a break.
- Avoid food or drinks that make your face turn red. Some examples may be caffeine, spicy foods, and alcoholic beverages. Although alcohol may worsen a case of rosacea, symptoms may be just as severe in someone who doesn't drink at all. This condition has been unfairly linked to alcoholism in the past.
- Avoid irritating cosmetics and facial products, especially those containing alcohol. Aftershave and glycolic acid are abrasive and can irritate your rosacea.
- Keep a diary of flushing episodes and note associated foods, products, activities, medications or other triggering factors. Try to avoid these triggers.

Treatment

Rosacea cannot be cured, but following a good skin care regimen faithfully can give you much clearer skin and actually help keep your symptoms from coming back. When left untreated, rosacea will get worse and may be more difficult to treat. Part of the treatment is preventative efforts taken by following the above advice. In addition, we may prescribe gels or creams or oral antibiotics. It takes a minimum of 6 weeks of proper medication usage before we can determine whether it is working. Our office will monitor your progress every 6 weeks until a treatment plan that successfully controls your rosacea is identified. Since



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rosacea can't be cured, once your symptoms have cleared up, you will need to continue using your daily therapy. Without this regular therapy your symptoms may return. Studies have shown that of patients who stopped treatment, many had a relapse of symptoms within one week to six months. Of those who stayed on daily therapy, 77% did not have a return of rosacea symptoms.

Laser Treatments for Redness and Broken Blood Vessels

Your skin care regimen will not take away your baseline redness and blood vessels. Soje Laser & Light Treatments are available at our office if you are concerned with redness. Please note insurance companies consider laser treatments to be a cosmetic benefit, so will not cover these treatments. Our rosacea patients are thrilled with the results they achieve with laser treatments. If you would like more information, call our cosmetic consultant for an evaluation appointment.

The following is a list of factors that **may** exacerbate your rosacea. It is unlikely that you will react to everything on this list. But do try to avoid those items that make your rosacea flare.

Weather

Sun
Strong winds
Cold
Humidity

Emotional influences

Stress
Anxiety

Temperature-related

Saunas
Hot baths
Simple overheating
Excessively warm environments

Physical exertion

Exercise
"Lift and load" jobs

Beverages

Alcohol, especially red wine, beer, bourbon, gin, vodka, or champagne
Hot drinks, including hot cider, hot chocolate, coffee or tea

Foods

Liver
Dairy products including yogurt, sour cream, and some cheeses
Chocolate and vanilla
Soy sauce and vinegar
Vegetables, including eggplant, tomatoes, spinach, lima and navy beans and peas
Fruits, including avocados, bananas, red plums, figs, and citrus fruits.
Hot and spicy foods

Skin care products

Some cosmetics and hair sprays especially those containing alcohol, witch hazel, or fragrance
Topical steroids
Any substance that causes redness or stinging