

# Breakouts 101: How to Treat Different Types of Acne

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From the occasional whitehead to full-on painful pimples, different things cause different types of breakouts. Knowing what they are and how to treat them is half the battle of keeping skin clear and blemish-free. New York dermatologist Gary Goldenberg, MD breaks down the different types of acne and how we can get rid of them.

## **Whiteheads**

The earliest forms of acne, whiteheads are a type of “comedonal” or noninflammatory type of acne that are closed. Common causes include hormonal changes or blocked pores.

*How to treat them:* Topical creams such as retin-A can get rid of whiteheads. You can also visit your dermatologist to have them extracted.

## **Blackheads**

Another form of noninflammatory acne, but unlike whiteheads that are open, keratin gives them their dark color. Blocked pores and changes in hormones also cause blackheads to form.

*How to treat them:* Retin-A creams and medicated cleansers like Peter Thomas Roth's BETA HYDROXY ACID 2% ACNE WASH, can get rid of the impurities that clog pores and clear up blackheads. You can also visit your dermatologist for acne surgery.

### **Pimples**

These are a group of acne bumps that become inflamed, making this a severe stage of acne. If left untreated, they can lead to scarring. Changes in hormones can cause pimples.

*How to treat them:* One way to treat pimples is by using a combination of retin-A, benzoyl peroxide and topical antibiotic cream. Photodynamic therapy is an in-office option, as well as oral antibiotics.

### **Cystic Acne**

This severe type of acne consists of deep, acne bumps that look and feel like cysts. They're painful and almost always leads to scarring, especially if patients try to drain them. The cause of this type of acne is almost always hormonal.

*How to treat them:* Besides the typical topical agents, oral medications like antibiotic pills or Accutane are almost needed. Dr. Goldenberg has also had success with photodynamic therapy, as well as steroid injections to calm painful bumps.